THE LIVING AGE

VOL. 334 — *APRIL 15, 1928* — NO. 4328

AROUND THE WORLD

CAUTION and firm faith in the beneficent power of inertia have always characterized the activities of the League, whose last session proved no exception to this rule. *L'Europe Nouvelle*, ever the advocate of Continental solidarity, described the Hungarian arms-smuggling episode as 'a symbol, a sign, and a sympton that reveals a more general, a more profound, malaise.' The large Powers did not take the incident itself very seriously, and the British newspapers refused to be impressed by any aspect of the whole affair. France, on the other hand, detected a latent conflict between Locarno and Versailles, with the Central Powers backing Locarno to the limit. Germany's support of the Kellogg proposition is interpreted in the same light, for it puts all nations on an equal footing and proposes new barriers to war that would make all League investigations useless.

Geneva Achievements

The truth is that the forthcoming elections in France and Germany prevented the Great Powers from taking much definite action, and Secretary Kellogg's proposal therefore stands out as the most important suggestion that was discussed. Sisley Huddleston, writing on 'Two Conceptions of Peace,' gives the following colloquial summary of the American proposal: —

'"What!" exclaims Mr. Kellogg in effect. "You cry for peace and you nevertheless keep open the door to war? You want, by introducing the insoluble question of aggressor, to make exceptions, to insist on qualifications, to stipulate conditions in which nations would be justified in fighting, and thus to destroy entirely the proposed declaration of peace? To declare peace would be to violate the terms of the Covenant of the League, which — with its annexes — may oblige you to make war! I am reluctant to believe that the provisions of the Covenant really prevent the coöperation of the United States and members of the League in a common effort to abolish the institution of war. But it is you who thus find the League in opposition to our ideals, and you ought to know."'

Mr. Huddleston then shows that Europe proposes to enforce peace via the League, while America would renounce force entirely. 'Nobody,' he says, 'who

Copyright 1928, by the Living Age Co.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

possesses a certain degree of strength will truly consent to be neutralized as America proposes, and nobody will truly consent, as Europe demands, to alienate his strength in a hypothetic service' — namely, that of enforcing the status quo all over the map. 'We are asked,' he adds, 'to sit on the lid of a boiler — and thus to make the explosion inevitable. The Franco-American correspondence sets in high relief this fact: that the efforts of Continental nations have been to make the League, by means of various instruments, a partnership for preserving the status quo, if possible by peaceful methods, but ultimately by force of arms.'

England

Two Liberal by-election triumphs indicate that the tide has turned against the Tories, and even the Conservative *Saturday Review* prophesies further defeats between now and the General Election, when it expects a return of the Tories with a smaller but more compact majority. The *New Statesman* goes further, saying that the results of the two elections 'strongly support two contentions that have been persistently put forward in these columns: first, that the Conservatives got into office on a brief and evanescent wave of opinion, — and, even so, representing only a minority of the electorate, — and that if they had appealed to the country at any time during the last two or three years they would have been very heavily defeated; and second, that those who regard or affect to regard the political forces of Liberalism as dead, or even dwindling, are making a very serious practical miscalculation.'

The real political sensation of the year, however, is the Zinoviev letter, which again attracted public attention as a result of the Foreign Office scandals. What the Labor Party imputes is that the dismissed Gregory, in connivance with the *Daily Mail* and certain Tories, concocted a forged letter on the eve of the election. Mr. Thomas Marlowe, who was editor of the *Daily Mail* at the time and was responsible for the publication of the document, wrote to the *Observer* stating that the Zinoviev letter was authentic and that Ramsay MacDonald tried to conceal it from the public until the election was over instead of having it published at once through the Foreign Office and taking the electorate into his confidence. Responsible opinion censures Mr. Marlowe for saying, 'I insisted I must have it [the Zinoviev letter],' but his exculpation of Gregory and the statement that the letter cost him nothing are generally accepted. Mr. MacDonald now says that Mr. Marlowe's letter answers itself and proves that there was conspiracy. The *Manchester Guardian* joins the Labor leader in asking for a full judicial inquiry.

Middle East

Almost the entire British press railed against the Egyptians for turning down the draft of the proposed treaty of alliance. The *New Statesman*, however, took a rather temperate attitude, expressing surprise that anyone should have thought the treaty would be approved by the Egyptian Parliament. This journal pointed out that since the British have no intention of withdrawing it is rather foolish of them to expect to be invited to remain, and that it is only natural that any terms legalizing the occupation of the country by British forces should be turned down.

Sir Austen Chamberlain has announced that the defeat of the treaty is 'a misfortune rather for Egypt than for Great Britain.' The present arrangement, concluded in 1922, when England recognized Egyptian independence with certain reservations, has worked satisfactorily, and can presumably continue to operate indefinitely.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The *Manchester Guardian* points out the two fundamental causes that lie behind the disagreement. For one thing, the Egyptian Parliament as constituted by England must pass upon all matters of national policy. Parliament in turn is dominated by the Nationalist Party, or Wafd, whose leader, Mustapha Pasha Nahas, enjoys the reality of power without any of its inconvenient responsibilities. Thus, when Sir Austen and Sarwat Pasha had carefully drawn up a draft for the treaty, he coolly dismissed it as impossible, and went his way.

The reason for this attitude is the presence of the British Army, which according to the *Manchester Guardian* could perhaps be dispensed with entirely, or at least be confined to the shores of the Canal, which it is its duty to protect. If the Egyptians were told that England would keep out of their country unless trouble broke loose, they would then be likely to police themselves satisfactorily.

The *Daily Herald* levels this biting criticism at British policy throughout the entire Middle East: —

'That everywhere through this vast area relations with the inhabitants are bad and on the way to becoming worse is in itself a criticism, if not a condemnation, of the policy which is being pursued. It is futile to reply alike to Egyptians, to Irakis, to Wahabis, to Persians, with mere denunciations; to retort that the elected Parliaments of Egypt and Irak are all dominated by "extremists" and "superextremists"; that the Governments of Persia and Arabia are both inspired by a spirit of unreason and of provocation.

'It may please Sir Austen Chamberlain to pay himself high compliments, and to praise his own policy as both "honest and generous." But the hard fact remains that the peoples of these Eastern countries with which he and his colleagues are dealing are unimpressed by their "generosity," and suspicious of their honesty.'

Even the *New Statesman* takes a more moderate tone, describing the recent trouble with Ibn Saud as follows: —

'What seems most likely is that he is temporizing with the powerful Wahabi tribes led by Feisul al Dawish, who have been raiding the Irakis, and whose loyalty to Ibn Saud himself is decidedly suspect. Whether they are really meditating rebellion we do not pretend to know; but they have old grudges against the Saud dynasty, and the more fanatical spirits can easily find new grounds for complaint in the King's tolerant attitude toward enemies of the faith and heretics. We are inclined to believe, then, that Ibn Saud's real concern is not so much to prevent the sinful Moslems of Irak and Transjordan from smoking and drinking as to establish his authority over his own wild men. He may even think that it will pay him to let them have the rope to hang themselves: they are not likely to come happily out of a serious contest with the Koweit bombing squadrons.'

In a leading article devoted to British difficulties in that part of the world the *Saturday Review* says: —

'He is a thoughtless man who does not sometimes feel depressed with the vastness of the responsibilities that we have assumed in thus taking over almost the whole southern half of the old Ottoman Empire in Asia. If we had been free to choose, we should have ordered affairs very differently. We should have concentrated on Palestine, have made an immensely strong Transjordania (in the military sense), and have restricted our direct commitments in Irak to the region of the Tigris delta. It is odd that Mr. Churchill, who has so good a strategic eye, should not have grasped the obvious lesson of all his-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tory, from Saul to Alexander and from Julius Cæsar to Trajan, that a secure Transjordania is essential to the safety and prosperity of Palestine. Irak away from the coast has no such interest for us, especially since it became clear that it was no country for the surplus millions of India. But we have not been able to order these things to our liking, and we are now faced with serious complications.'

Now that France and Spain have agreed about the administration of Tangier, the way is open for a quadrilateral arrangement between these two nations and England and Italy. Under the present Statute of Tangier the Spaniards had been insisting on being given administrative control of the International Zone. This claim they have now abandoned, and are satisfied with having a Spaniard in charge of the local police force, which he controls in conjunction with a French official. During the Riffian warfare Abd-el-Krim used Tangier as a supply base, and his supporters were able to organize there secretly. Not only is this state of affairs impossible to-day, but the forthcoming conference of the 'Tangier Four' should clear up matters in this part of the world still further. Italy has always resented having been left out in the cold, and England welcomes the opportunity to soothe the ruffled Fascist feathers. It is even hoped, that by getting France and Italy to coöperate here, further discussions can be held that will iron out other grievances elsewhere.

The French Senate has finally passed the Franco-Swiss Convention submitting the unique and vexatious question of the Savoy Free Zones to the Hague Court. The Canton of Geneva is virtually surrounded by French territory, and for hundreds of years the adjacent territory of Haute-Savoie and Pays de Gex has made Geneva its economic geographical centre, which caused France to withdraw her customhouses some distance from the political border. The question to-day involves the neutrality of Haute-Savoie and the conduct of the Swiss during the war in strictly enforcing that status. Under Article 435 of the Treaty of Versailles that neutrality has been abrogated, and the advance of French customs barriers to the political border has damaged Geneva, forcing food prices to such heights that the removal of the League to another city has been suggested. The Swiss and French agreed to arbitrate the question as long ago as October 1924.

The *Nation and Athenæum*, a warm supporter of J. M. Keynes's antiprotectionist views, takes a recent episode in the French Chamber of Deputies as an object lesson in free trade. It seems that the Deputies, not daring to vote against the 'interests' who were demanding high tariffs, began bargaining with each other and promising protections for their various pet commodities. 'In many cases,' says the *Nation and Athenæum*, 'it was not even pretended that the duties were necessary. For example, M. Barthe, who represents Socialism and the wine growers, did not deny that the poor vintage had made the production of wine insufficient for the home consumption and consequently raised prices, but he insisted that the duty on wine must be raised in the same proportion as other duties, and he got his way. Bananas were taxed for the purpose of protecting Norman pears and apples, and among the new duties adopted was one on live turtles! This is what we shall come to if "safeguarding" is much further extended.'

On the eve of the German elections the possibility is being discussed of forming a moderately Conservative party. This group would include the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Germany

Right Wing of the People's Party and the Left Wing of the Nationalists, which has been disagreeing with the extreme Right Wing of the Nationalists over the Locarno-Geneva policy. The rest of the People's Party might combine with the Democrats to form a Liberal group. Such rumors arose after the foreign-affairs debate in the Reichstag, when Dr. Stresemann was supported by the 'Grand Coalition,' extending from the People's Party on the Right to the Socialists on the Left. Considerable progress was noted in the support being given Dr. Stresemann by moderate Nationalists, although the extremely reactionary Herr von Freytagh-Loringhoven regarded the Stresemann policy as already sufficiently tried and found wanting. He suggested returning to the policy of playing one Power or group of states against another, and of exploiting the Franco-Italian differences, as well as Germany's friendship with the Soviet. Dr. Stresemann pointed out that his policy did not exclude these methods, but that he prefers to work for constructive peace and to get other Powers to sign the optional clause of the Hague Court Statute.

Poland

The success of Marshal Pilsudski's supporters at the polls surprised nobody, the only question being what policy will be pursued from now on. According to the London *Times*, the Polish dictator is said to favor 'a stronger executive on the American pattern,' as well as thorough changes in the electoral system. Whether or not he will carry these reforms through Parliament and then dissolve that body remains to be seen. It is possible that the present Chamber may not support him fully, in which case he may want a legislative body of his own devising.

Again it must be remembered that the Marshal has lacked any party of his own, his supporters in the last election having rallied about him under the awkward ægis of the 'Non-Party Bloc of Coöperation with the Government.' This curious group contains princes, peasants, industrialists, Jews, Catholics, shopkeepers, trade-unionists, Conservatives, and Socialists. Its elements are so diverse that it has had to be split up into separate organizations, which can only be kept together by one man's directing genius.

Even these versatile supporters are not sufficient to keep Pilsudski in power unaided. The Socialists and Radical Peasants made substantial gains, and the Conservatives, except for the Catholic National Right, suffered losses. The Marshal himself is acceptable to both groups, although the Socialists resent some of the Conservative members in his Cabinet. In any case, he cannot be turned out of power constitutionally, and with the army behind him he is likely to remain in office indefinitely, being always assured of support from the Radical Left.

Since the proposed February meeting between Polish and Lithuanian delegates at Copenhagen failed to materialize, Premier Waldemaras wrote a note to the Polish Government suggesting that either the League of Nations be asked to appoint a delegate for negotiation or both Governments should begin verbal negotiations on March 30 at Königsberg. Minister Zaleski of Poland indicated his willingness to pursue the second course.

With communication across the border still an impossibility, Lithuania continues to develop her nationalism independent of Poland and to arouse patriotic sentiment for the recovery of Vilno, which is now reported to be of predominantly Polish population, although it is Lithuania's historic capital. Lithuania has been independ-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ent for ten years, and the *Saturday Review* remarks: 'It is high time for her to realize that a people does not improve the chances of retaining its liberty by continued defiance, not only of a powerful neighbor, but of all the other members of the League. Two wrongs do not make a right in international politics, any more than they do in ordinary intercourse between individuals.' The Polish Government had suggested opening 'immediate pourparlers with the object of establishing normal relations and good-neighborliness between Poland and Lithuania,' and Premier Waldemaras indicated the time and place for such negotiations.

The Balkans

Although the problem of Hungarian optants in Rumania came before the League Council at a time when Budapest was rather discredited by the St. Gotthard incident and Bucharest was believed to have found some sympathy in Rome for her case, Titulescu drew forth the ire of the British, French, and German representatives and forced a deadlock and postponement until the June meeting. Hungary had agreed unreservedly that two new members, coming from countries that were neutral during the war, should be appointed to the present Mixed Claims Commission, but Rumania sought to bind these judges to certain rules.

According to the Treaty of Trianon former Hungarian citizens in Transylvania were allowed to retain Hungarian nationality after the war. The question then arose whether these few men would be immune from the Rumanian land reform, which sanctioned the expropriation of large Rumanian estates and their conversion into small peasant holdings. Rumanian landowners had acceded to the land reform as an antidote to Bolshevism, but their fifty-year five-per-cent mortgages were rendered virtually valueless with the depreciation of the Rumanian currency.

The Hungarian optants, however, claimed exemption from the losses incurred in the fall in Rumanian currency, and the Hungarian Government lodged a claim in their behalf with the Conference of Ambassadors in Paris in August 1922. Since that time the problem of the Hungarian optants has been before the League Council, the Permanent Court at The Hague, and the Hungaro-Rumanian Mixed Claims Commission, as well as several special bodies. No solution acceptable to both Rumania and Hungary has been found thus far, and the dispute has now been extended for another three months in order to allow Rumania time to consider the Council's proposal to refer the question to the Mixed Claims Commission and two neutral members. Her attitude in June will probably remain unmodified unless some great change takes place in her internal political situation.

The Cabinet crisis which left the Government of Yugoslavia in a turmoil during most of February finally came to an end with the formation of a new Vukitchevitch Coalition Cabinet. This time the Radicals combined with both sections of the Democrats, for Dr. Milan Groll and Petar Markovitch secured two of the portfolios formerly held by supporters of Dr. Marinkovitch, who is again Minister of Foreign Affairs. Although the new Cabinet will perhaps be short-lived, its formation is generally regarded as a rally among the Parliamentary parties against Radič's proposals for a military premiership.

Famine in some parts of Albania caused by the poor crop of last year has forced the country to appeal to the General Secretary of the League of Nations for aid. The Italian Red Cross was requested to render assistance until

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the League Council considered the situation there.

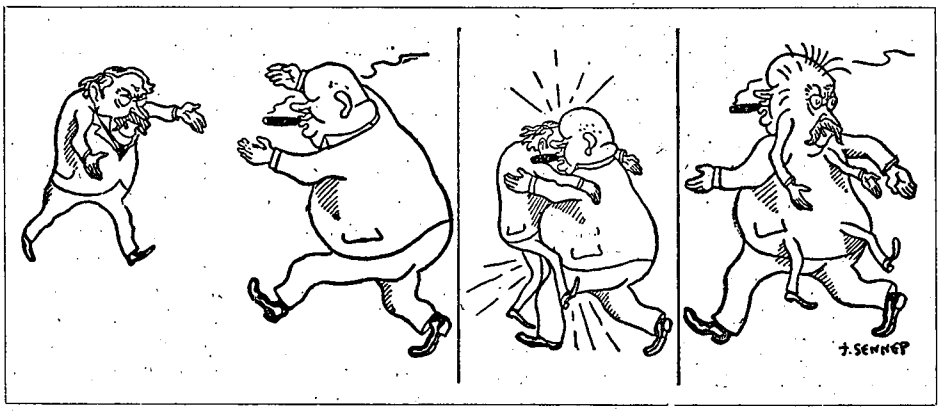
The following paragraph from the *Outlook* should be of interest to American readers: —

Latin America

'By no means the least important event of the past few days is the pronouncement of the Argentine delegate at Geneva that his country regards the Monroe Doctrine as a purely unilateral policy. Indeed, it would probably not be too much to say that it marks the first step in a struggle that will occupy the New World for the rest of the century — that between the United States and the Argentine for the hegemony of South America. We are inclined to forget that a great nation is arising in the Argentine, very conscious of its national ambitions, and it is a phenomenon to which Washington is also rather apt to shut its eyes.'

The same paper then adds that the Argentine is notoriously unpopular with the smaller Latin-American states whose independence the Monroe Doctrine still protects. Under these circumstances, therefore, it is unlikely that many Latin-American countries will abandon the protection of Washington for that of Buenos Aires, which is well capable of preserving its own independence, but is not yet strong enough to guarantee the security of others.

BRIAND AND STRESEMANN



THE NEW ENTENTE CORDIALE

— *Écho de Paris*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BUSINESS ABROAD

International Industries

It is obvious from Mr. Samuel Courtauld's address at the annual meeting of his company that remarkable expansion has taken place in the artificial silk industry, and particularly in the cellulose acetate process. Although operated along very conservative financial lines, that company has recently announced a 100-per-cent stock bonus and a dividend increase from 22½ to 25 per cent. The capitalization of Courtaulds now amounts to about 120 million dollars, the bonus having been made because of 'the desirability of bringing the capital of the company into closer relation with its actual assets.' Factory expansion has been proceeding steadily, and by midsummer the Wolverhampton factory, the second largest artificial silk factory in the world, should be producing. The Viscose Company in America, which is controlled by Courtaulds, is enlarging two of its factories; La Soie Artificielle de Calais is beginning to produce; and the Glanzstoff-Courtauld factory at Cologne is nearly finished. Almost the only market which suffers from a depression, Mr. Courtauld pointed out, is the French.

Monopolistic claims recently made by the Celanese group of artificial silk manufacturers were ignored in the Courtaulds chairman's address. The future of the artificial silk industry lies in cellulose acetate yarns. These are of softer texture, they are stable under changes of temperature and exposure to moisture, and they possess a non-metallic lustre. Only 10 per cent of the total world production is manufactured in this way, and the demand is so great that consumers have been rationed. The Celanese group reported that 'it is impossible to manufacture cellulose acetate yarns, fabrics, or other textile articles of commercial value without infringing at some stage some of the company's patent rights.' Courtaulds, however, offered to indemnify agents, manufacturers, and others using Courtauld acetate silk against any action brought by the Celanese group under their alleged patent rights. Manufacturers in Germany and America do not take the sweeping claims of the Celanese interests seriously.

Artificial silk has flourished in Holland, which now supplies 8¾ per cent of the total world production, and according to *Der deutsche Volkswirt* the Dutch are expected to expand their production still further, to about 10 per cent of the world output.

After years of depression in the sugar market and industry, largely owing to increased production and stationary consumption, steps are being taken to bring about some sort of stabilization. At the end of 1927 the total visible and invisible stocks, unsold and unsalable, was estimated at 2½ million tons, or about one tenth of last season's crop. During the past seven years the production of beet sugar has trebled, and that of cane sugar has likewise steadily increased. Last November the Cuban Government summoned a conference in Paris to discuss possible remedial measures with several European sugar-producing countries. It was admitted that an increase in consumption was improbable, but it was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

suggested that the sugar output be reduced and the unsold stocks melted up in order to safeguard the market. Satisfactory arrangements were finally made at a conference in Berlin, and an agreement was signed by representatives of the German, Czechoslovakian, Polish, and Belgian sugar industries. Hungary is expected to follow suit.

Cuba has agreed to restrict her 1927–28 crop to 4 million tons, which is about 15 per cent less than last year's. Since the grinding of beet sugar has already commenced, it was found impossible to restrict the 1927–28 output of European countries, but it was agreed that subsequent production should not exceed that of 1927–28. Acreage under beet is not to be increased, and governments are expected to encourage the home consumption of sugar.

Czechoslovakia, of course, is intensely interested in the scheme, since she is one of the great beet-sugar exporting countries of Europe. Dr. R. Wachsmann, writing in the *Neue Freie Presse*, says: 'The future of the sugar market is more important for Czechoslovakia than for any other European producing country. There are fundamental structural differences between her and both of the other European parties to the agreement, Poland and Germany, for the safety of future export possibilities affects the solid profitability of her whole apparatus of production. In Czechoslovakia the recovery of the world sugar market and export prices is a question of actual existence. Unlike Germany and Poland, the internal market of Czechoslovakia takes only a small part of her production. And the internal market is unable to bear the burden of financing export losses year in and year out.'

Countries not included in the restriction agreement, however, may increase their output, and *European Finance* declares that 'it appears unlikely that any appreciable success will ensue from the Paris and Berlin Conferences, or that any really effective action can be taken, unless the Cuban entente enlarges its membership to such an extent as to be able to exercise a decisive influence on the establishment of an equilibrium between the world's sugar production and its consumption.'

France is not a party to the agreement, and agriculturists there have sought customs protection. The import duty on sugar has been raised to 100 francs per 100 kilos in spite of the Government's original proposal of 90 francs. This protection will yield 1148 million francs in 1928 instead of but 540 million francs as in 1924, provided, of course, consumption remains the same.

Rubber producers in the Dutch East Indies oppose efforts to be included in the British restriction scheme, and a report from Batavia asserts that apart from personal interests rubber growers maintain that restriction is practically impossible, since the cultivation of rubber is virtually uncontrolled. Some arrangement like the Brazilian scheme valorizing coffee has been suggested, but a writer in *Amsterdamsche Handelsblad*, who has long been connected with the Dutch rubber trade and is a heavy importer of Brazilian coffee into Europe, feels sure that government control of native-produced rubber is foredoomed to failure. The Dutch may consider coöperation in a Central Sales organization, but even such an expedient is dubious. Many English producers are also dissatisfied with the present scheme, and the Kuala Lumpur Chamber of Commerce has passed resolutions declaring that Dutch coöperation is absolutely essential, and that if re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

striction is to be abandoned it should first be modified so as not to cause too great a fluctuation in the market. The Johore Planters' Association and the Planters' Association of Malaya support this resolution, and agree that the pivotal price for rubber should be reduced to between 1*s.* and 1*s.* 3*d.*

Linoleum producers in Germany, Sweden, Norway, Latvia, and Switzerland have combined under the Continental Linoleum Union, a new holding company capitalized at 4,850,000 dollars, with headquarters at Zurich. A convention on prices and territories to which the British producers are a party has been drawn up, but since America is not included, and since our production is five times as great as that of England, the leading European producer, it is doubtful whether prices in the world market will reach excessive levels. The nature of the commodity is said to be another factor preventing high monopoly prices.

New oil deposits have been discovered in Southern Chile, and *L'Indépendance Belge* says that the Government has appropriated 10 million pesos for further research. In Mexico a new oil field near Guadalupe Hidalgo is being opened, and Venezuela is expected to be among the chief world producers of petroleum this year. A reported 7-per-cent decline in the output of Baku has given rise to the rumor that these fields may be nearing exhaustion, but oil has been discovered at Dolnymadretzy in Bulgaria, and the *Nieuwe Rotterdamsche Courant* reports that the Bulgarian Government has reserved all the ground in the vicinity for the State.

England

The first two months of 1928 saw England making record investments both at home and abroad. Domestic capital issues in February totaled 144 million dollars, Dominion and Colonial came to 22 million dollars, and foreign to 12 million dollars, the total for the month being 178 million, as against 129 million for the same month last year and 173 for the previous month this year. Over 350 million dollars have been subscribed since January 1, as compared with 253 million in 1927 and 273 million in 1926. Commercial and industrial stocks proved especially attractive, electrical issues coming second, investment trusts coming third, and coal, iron, steel, and mining consuming most of the rest.

More recent developments reveal great activity in commercial motor shares, which, according to the *Statist*, advanced about 30 per cent in a single week. The reason for this rise is that the railways are placing large orders for chars-à-bancs with private companies. But even if the Roads Transport Bill that would permit the railways to operate buses does not receive parliamentary approval, the boom should continue. Technical progress in construction, decreased costs of operating and manufacture, the suppression of foreign competition, and the lack of railway improvement — all these factors have placed the industry in a highly favorable position. Some fluctuations in the market price of stocks may well be expected, but the upward tendency is fundamentally sound.

France

With stabilization of the franc all but taken for granted, Paris is now chiefly concerned with the possibility of further currency appreciation. The *Statist* reports a feeling of confidence in the ability of the authorities to defend the franc by means of the large holdings accumulated by the Bank of France, but it finds that importers and producers are taking measures against the 'remote possibility' of appreciation. 'For weeks past,' says this journal,

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

'the Bank of France, which buys sterling at 124.02 and sells at 124.10, has been forced to absorb large quantities of the British currency, as was indicated by the fact that the closing daily rate for the pound sterling remained constant at 124.02. The explanation given is that importers were protecting themselves against an eventual fall in the value of imported goods by immediately converting the equivalent value in foreign currencies into francs. In the same way certain producers, such as coal-owners, who are obliged to accumulate stocks, were taking steps to guard against a possible fall of values in the home market. This was considered safe procedure as a speculative measure because they could rely upon the Bank of France protecting the franc against further depreciation.'

The almost universal confidence in M. Poincaré is explained by the fact that the year's revenue from taxation totaled about 43½ billion francs as against a total estimated expenditure of 39½ billions in the same period. The 4-billion-franc surplus soon faded away, however, to 700 millions, and the issuing of further supplementary credits will lower it about 500 millions more. The *Economist* offers the following comment: 'There was never any intention, moreover, that whatever surplus might result should be devoted to debt reduction, which is the destination of all Budget surpluses. It was foreseen that many supplementary demands for credits would be made during the year, and that these must necessarily be met from any surplus that was secured. At the same time, the taxes imposed by a French Budget Bill seldom comprise the whole of the year's imposts. Worried Finance Ministers, forced months after the Budget has passed into law to consent to additional expenditure for purposes not previously contemplated, are frequently compelled to cast round for means to raise at least some of the extra money required. Hence "supplementary" taxation, as well as supplementary credits, which toward the autumn usually transform a Budget that was perfectly balanced when adopted into a very uncertain quantity that may result either in a handsome surplus, as in 1926, or in a disastrous deficit.'

The manufacture of bearings is becoming one of the leading Swedish industries, and the Svenska Kullager Fabriken, or S. K. F., bids fair to take its place beside the Match Trust in Swedish world trade. It has just absorbed the Compagnie d'Applications Mécaniques, the biggest French company in the field, having issued 3¾ million dollars of new Class B stock to finance the transaction. The French factories have the same capacity as the Gothenburg works, 15,000 bearings daily, and the total production of the company will now amount to 35 per cent of the world's production. America is the other great centre of the industry, but most of our output is absorbed locally, whereas S. K. F. caters to the whole world. The chief manufacturers of bearings include the United States, France, Germany, England, Sweden, and Switzerland, the chief exporters being Sweden, Germany, Switzerland, and France. By purchasing the French company the Swedish Bearing Trust controls 75 per cent of the French production.

Germany

Russo-German negotiations for a new commercial treaty have been postponed following the arrest of six German engineers and mechanics who were installing electrical equipment sold by the A. E. G. to Russia. They were accused of sabotage by the Soviet, but the incident is taken in Germany as

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

further evidence of the embarrassing positions in which the Soviets often place Germans who do business in Russia, and it brought Berlin's growing dissatisfaction with the failure of the last trade treaty to a head. Some observers feel that the postponed negotiations may lead to a change in Russian policy and to more liberal relations with Western Europe and the United States.

Meanwhile the Russian press is loud in denouncing alleged sabotage by the agents of foreign capitalists. *Pravda* says that sabotage has occurred, not only in the Don Basin, where the six engineers were working, but in Leningrad, Briansk, and elsewhere. *Ekonomischeskaya Zhizn* reports that expenditures have been increased 40 per cent because of sabotage in the Urals, while *Izvestia* asks for details of the 'forty million rubles sunk in the sands of Turkestan,' in which foreigners were not even interested.

Berliner Tageblatt has made a survey of the balance sheets of 8115 German corporations, exclusive of banking firms, for the past year. The average net profit amounted to 4.6 per cent, and gross profits to 10.5 per cent. Of the capital invested, 57.8 per cent was German and 42.2 per cent foreign. Profits were made on 88.5 per cent of the capitalization by 63.5 per cent of the corporations. During January, however, Germany's foreign trade was more unfavorable than in any month since January 1925, the adverse balance having increased to 118,704,000 dollars from 47,600,000 dollars the month before. The greatest increase in imports was noted among foodstuffs.

Dr. Curtius, the Reichs Minister of Trade, has declared that Germany 'will denounce her commercial treaty with England on the first available opportunity in order to attempt to place our relationship with England on another basis.' Answering the criticism of Herr Le Jeune-Jung, he said that the most-favored-nation treaties made with the United States and England had not come up to expectations, and that the present protective policy of England was directed primarily against German products. Denunciation of the Trade Agreement cannot be made before 1929.

The German textile industry has been waging a hard fight to regain her foreign markets, for her production costs are comparatively high. During the past three years German textile exports have shown a steady increase in value, although they compose a smaller percentage of Germany's total exports. The establishment of mills in India, China, and Japan has worked to the detriment of the Germans.

North German Lloyd has apparently prospered during the past year, for its annual report showed that profits had increased 30 per cent. The dividend was raised from 6 to 8 per cent, and some observers predict continued prosperity with further additions to the fleet, as well as material benefits arising from the release of its sequestrated American properties.

Net profits of 12,600,000 dollars for the economic year ending September 30, 1927, have just been announced by Vereinigte Stahlwerke A.-G. During its first full year the great Steel Trust seems to have developed very satisfactorily, since a 6-per-cent dividend was declared.

Ufa has shown some financial improvement during the past year of reorganization, although a dividend is hardly expected on May 31; according to *Kölnische Zeitung*. German cinema producers, like the American, are seeking lower luxury taxes, but American competition, despite intricate working agreements, remains the most vexatious problem.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Although no crisis in the labor situation which now confronts Germany is expected until after the elections, the Union of German Employers' Associations reports that labor unions have pending rights of notice to terminate 247 contracts affecting 3.2 million employees. The *Statist* remarks: 'The labor outlook continues as critical as ever. Discontent is rife in almost all labor centres, and there is a strike movement smouldering throughout the Reich. The idea of the trades-union leaders is to bring about strikes in those trades that must immediately affect others. Thus, for a week past, a strike has been called by the unions in the toolmakers' trade. The previous week it was the ironworkers who struck, and obtained, as in the case of every recent strike here, an increase in wages.'

Central Europe

Although conditions looked favorable at the time of the Polish stabilization loan, which was expected to act as a stimulus to economic development, the *Economist* feels that present conditions in that country do not quite meet expectations. Unemployment has increased slightly, partly due to seasonal variations in the building and sugar industries. Some observers feel that the reason foreign capital has not produced any marked effect on the situation is that only $2\frac{1}{2}$ of the 15 million dollars provided for economic assistance have thus far been used. The rest of the money lies idle in the vaults of the Polish Bank.

Polish trade with Soviet Russia shows slight progress. Of Poland's exports, 1.8 per cent go to her great eastern neighbor, who, in turn, supplies 3.6 of her imports. Russia does not import much more from Poland than she does from Latvia. The *Economist* suggests that 'perhaps if the trade of contraband could be taken into account the comparison for Russia would be less unfavorable.'

The League Council approved the Bulgarian stabilization loan of about 22 million dollars, of which about 7,300,000 will be spent in strengthening the National Bank. The Agricultural and Central Coöperative banks, all of which are public institutions, will receive 3,165,500 dollars. Budget arrears will be met by 5,357,000 dollars, and the remainder will be spent on railroads and highways. A foreign technical expert is to remain attached to the National Bank. Its independence is assured, and it is to be transformed into a private joint stock bank within two years.

The Bulgarian Minister for Trade and Industry has submitted a project to the Cabinet providing for thorough and centralized exploitation of the mineral resources of the country. It is proposed to build a briquette factory with a capacity of 300 tons daily near the Maritza Lignite Mines, as well as a thermoelectrical central power station with a capacity of 6000 horsepower. The nation also expects to double her acreage under cotton this year, and expert instructors are now educating the peasants on how to sow and harvest the crop. The banks as well as the Government have encouraged the movement by granting credits to peasants establishing cotton plantations, for this commodity is expected to play an important part in the country's future trade. Last year 38,000 acres were under cotton, and it is estimated that within three years Bulgarian plantations will be able to supply the entire home demand.

Italy and Spain

Italian mines have not as yet recovered from the deflation period, and the metal trades and foundries are only showing improvement in spots. The electrical industries, however, are pros-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pering, with the expectation of bigger orders to fulfill the national electrification scheme. Some of the chemical industries are bettering themselves, although rubber, of course, is weak. Improvement has been made among the textiles, and the artificial silk and Jacquard looms are particularly busy. Silk is not doing so well, for the Italian producers are forced to meet the competition of Japan and the new artificial product. Spinners also complain of having to pay enormous prices for cocoons.

Two royal decrees have disclosed the regulations concerning the convertability of the Bank of Italy's notes into gold and gold bills. It now appears that the Bank must give in exchange for its notes either gold or gold bills drawn on countries whose bank notes are exchangeable in gold. The Bank is not, however, compelled to give its notes in exchange for gold. The aim of the Bank is to keep the lira between 18.90 and 19.10 to the dollar. Signor Volpi, Minister of Finance, has made a declaration that explains matters further. 'The note issue,' he has said, 'is thenceforward put under the responsibility of the Bank of Italy, which means that credit operations will be decided exclusively from a banking point of view.' In other words, the Government will exercise no control over the Bank's operations — something that has never before happened in Italian history.

Spain's arbitrary treatment of foreign oil companies has resulted in a significant exchange of messages between Paris and Madrid. At the end of January M. Briand protested against the expropriation of certain oil companies doing business in Spain, and the Spanish Foreign Office replied with a polite denial of all charges made. The newspapers in both Paris and Madrid then began insulting each other, and the French Ambassador took the whole matter up with King Alfonso, who, it appears, had gone into it carefully for himself. The King is said to have agreed that the French complaints were justified and to have assured the Ambassador that justice would be done. America likewise protested, though less strongly than France; while England, whose interests were also involved, did nothing. The *Daily Telegraph*, in which this story appeared, points out that the King of Spain, realizing the unfairness of the handicaps imposed on foreigners, and valuing their good will, has taken steps that should do away with the present grievances.

An International Nitrogen Conference will be held on board a steamship cruising the Adriatic during the first part of May. Among those present will be the Chilean Minister at Berlin and representatives of the German Dye Trust, Imperial Chemicals of Great Britain, and French, Italian, and Swedish producers of synthetic nitrogen. The great secrecy surrounding the conference has given rise to the rumor that the natural and synthetic producers seek unified action to control the market by limitation of production. A division of markets may also be arranged. If no agreement is reached, Chile may reduce her export duty, which expires on July 1, and consequently reduce the price of that product in the world market.

Chile's new Central Bank, modeled closely on Federal Reserve lines, has begun issuing a series of monthly bulletins. The first of these indicates that the country is undergoing a stabilization crisis, with the usual failures and reorganizations. Revival of the nitrate industry, however, has eased the depression, and this year's excellent harvest has also produced favorable results.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TOPICS OF THE TIMES

LEADER PAGE CLIPPINGS

THE PRODIGIOUS POINCARÉ [1]

[M. POINCARÉ, the French Prime Minister, has just made a remarkable six-hour speech in defense of the financial policy of his Government.]

THE success of M. Poincaré as a politician deprived the world of a prodigy. He might have become famous as a performer of those mechanical feats of the brain which to persons of ordinary mental organization seem to approach the marvelous. If it may be said without disrespect, he could have dazzled the public of the music halls. This fact about him is important, for Poincaré the prodigy goes far to explain Poincaré the statesman.

He reads three times as fast as the average professional man. He writes at such a speed, without crossings-out or interpolations, that he has no need of a shorthand-typist and does not employ one. The common faculty of remembering readily what one writes he possesses in an extreme degree. All his speeches are written out and simultaneously committed to memory. His literal accuracy is impeccable. On the second day of his conference with Mr. Bonar Law in January 1923, the conference which preceded the French entry into the Ruhr, M. Poincaré received his experts at 2.30 P.M. They read to him their comment on the Bonar Law Plan. When they left twenty minutes later M. Poincaré sat down and wrote several letters. At three o'clock he was in the conference room, where he delivered a speech which contained practically the whole of the long report in the actual words and figures of the document. Such an occasional feat is astonishing, but not more so than his mercilessly sure remembrance of dates, persons, and events for many years back.

M. Poincaré's way of living is designed to keep this athletic brain at the full pitch of activity. He is a teetotaler in the English sense, an abstainer even from wine. Regular as the clock he rises, does gymnastic exercises, drives through his planned day of incessant work, and sleeps as infallibly as the Pope. He hoards minutes as a peasant hoards money. His efficiency is as nearly one hundred per cent as can be expected of the human machine. His industry shrinks before no task. When he went to the Quai d'Orsay in 1922 he sent for all the papers relating to the Conference of Ambassadors, — documents mountains high on Memel, on German disarmament, on Danzig, — read everything, and had the facts at his finger-ends within a few days. Incapable of using the labor of others as a substitute for his own, he is a sculptor who must also be a quarryman. There is a certain vanity in this aim at self-sufficiency which has its comic aspect. Deputations of experts who come to instruct him often leave his Cabinet with the humiliating feeling that they have been lectured by a professor in

[1] By a Paris correspondent, from the *Manchester Guardian* (Independent Liberal daily), *February* 6

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their own subject. If he is going to deliver an address at a dinner of motor-car manufacturers, he must needs spend an hour or two the night before in collecting material which will enable him to say something that seems fresh and informed even to an audience of specialists.

It is the secret both of his successes and of his failures that M. Poincaré is the prisoner of his own mental processes. He gets his way with colleagues — especially when he is at the head of a one-man government, as he was from 1922 to 1924 — by the sheer force of a mind made up. Public opinion, when a national issue is involved, is dragged in his wake owing to the same impression of imposing certainty. That aim at unalterable certainty, at absolute intellectual consistency, is, nevertheless, M. Poincaré's crippling fault. Once he has studied his subject, the conception at which he has arrived must be kept intact or he is done. Once he has constructed a paragraph which exactly expresses his views on the French debt to America or on the stabilization of the exchange, he repeats it slavishly in speech after speech. Nothing is more characteristic of this mental rigidity than his inability to ignore criticism. The minutest comment from the most negligible of adversaries inevitably draws him into speech when silence would be the best reply. His policy must stand entire. He maps out affairs in a strict order, marking in advance the stages in the accomplishment of his plan. A check shakes but does not divert him. No margin is left for give and take. It is the supreme misfortune of M. Poincaré that the world, incomprehensibly, never quite does what he expects or wants. If the earth were a mechanical toy he would be a great ruler.

In spite of the notion prevailing in other countries, M. Poincaré has not the essential qualifications for dictatorship. Often irascible and domineering, he does not, indeed, suffer other wise men gladly. But he was bred in a frock-coated Republicanism, and that also his mind has made its own. He has a Republican's respect for constitutions and a lawyer's respect for law. Experience and success have not made him a leader for whom men will lose their souls in order to save them. He has no flashing contacts. When he speaks in the Chamber he stands in the Tribune like an illustration of a proposition of Euclid. The style is fluent, correct, desiccated, glassy. The horny voice has not those rich overtones which marry feeling to reason, the eye wants inner illumination, the smile flickers on a mask. He pronounces the word *patrie* without a gleam.

It is not of such stuff that dictators are made. Yet dangerous he has been and may be. A man of narrow strength, whose obstinacy is as much of the mind as of character, whose policy is not enough fashioned by live, external forces, but stands blindly foursquare against them — such a man is often dangerous. 'Poincaré,' said a French statesman of another temper, 'knows everything and understands nothing.' That judgment is pregnant.

THE TRANS-SAHARAN RAILWAY[2]

THE old dream of spanning the Sahara with a railway is about to be realized. '*On fera le Transsaharien*,' the newspapers announce laconically, and our fathers are filled with the same enthusiasm that they felt when the Suez Canal was first projected and the Wild West began to be subdued. We, however, are more skeptical. Living in the age of automobile and air travel, we ask ourselves if the romance of Pierre

[2] From *Neue Zürcher Zeitung* (Swiss Liberal Republican daily), *February* 26

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Benoit's *Atlantide* has not infected the advocates of a Saharan railway.

It is, nevertheless, significant that the French Government has recommended the project and that a bill has been submitted to the present session of the Chamber providing for the preparation of a final attempt to analyze the problem. The French provinces and Algeria have given the measure their support through their Chambers of Commerce, and the Supreme Council for National Defense has come out in behalf of the undertaking, so that now only public opinion and its representatives have to be won over.

Even before the war a group of financiers under the leadership of Senator Berthelot wanted to consider the plan for a Trans-Saharan railway. The great service rendered by the French colonies during the World War, and General Mangin's propaganda for a 'black army,' emphasized the military arguments, the result being that the 'Trans-Saharan' has now become popular in Conservative circles. But anyone who imagines that military strategy is motivating the supporters of this movement is doing them a grave injustice. Most of the advocates of the Trans-Saharan — men like Corréard, Mornet, and Mahieu — have been warm supporters of the measure for twenty years, and are eager to accomplish the great civilizing task of linking North Africa with the Niger.

The Comité du Transsaharien has kept the details of its plan to itself, for fear of arousing premature rivalry among the three Algerian departments and the French West African territories, whose protests might encourage parliamentary opposition. Various technical projects were prepared by Senator Mahieu, the engineer, when he was General Secretary to the Ministry of Public Works in 1923, and these plans have been condensed into a general report. This distinguished railway expert, knowing the interest of our readers in this problem, received us personally and gave us his own views on the possibilities of the Sahara railway.

The Trans-Saharan railway will chiefly consist of an instrument for transportation and colonization. As an artery directly connecting the two richest parts of French Africa, it will help the economic and cultural development of this entire region. The Frenchman serving his country below the equator will be able to reach Paris and Marseille in five days, whereas at present the ocean voyage takes thirty-five days. Only steamers now link the different parts of French Colonial Africa, and the inhabitants use this means of travel very rarely. It is not planned to attempt to cultivate the Sahara, as certain mocking critics have suggested, although its sterility and lack of water cannot, in M. Mahieu's opinion, be proved to have existed for all time. The desert is merely an obstacle to be surmounted, and the railway will make it easier to control and will check the caravan marauders.

People imagine that the project involves no great technical difficulties. Short railways through desert country already exist in Africa and in other parts of the world, Russia having built a very long line through Central Asia. Sand dunes must be avoided, since it is obviously impossible to lay a firm roadbed on such shifting ground.

One of the important questions thus far raised is why Oran has been chosen as the Mediterranean base for the projected railway, rather than the capital city of Algiers. The reason is that the country here is free from sand dunes and the road can be laid on a rocky bed. The track will roughly follow the Moroccan boundary, passing through Colomb Bechar. If the line

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

went to Algiers, it would have to be longer and would have to pass over a greater stretch of desert country.

Farther south, toward the Touat region and the Plateau of Tademait, the Sahara becomes a succession of plateaus more suitable than any other kind of ground for the railway. Insala and Hoggar lie too far to the east, and the road will follow the route discovered by General Estienne. The uncurving course and the absence of any stations will permit the trains to run at the greatest possible speed. The road will end in Bourem on the Niger, whence branch lines can be built to Timbuktu and Senegal on one side and to English Nigeria and Lake Chad on the other.

The shortest project involves a road twenty-five hundred kilometres long that would take seven years to build, and would be constructed simultaneously from the northern and southern ends. Algeria could build three or four hundred kilometres a year and the Niger one hundred, this estimate being based on the effectiveness and speed of labor in British Nigeria.

The Sahara railway is planned to have a normal gauge, with a view to its being used in connection with three other lines, and the locomotives will be run by petroleum and electricity, since water and coal cannot be had in the desert. Supporters of the scheme have not given up hope of discovering new electromagnetic fluids and minerals in the Sahara plateau. Fifty-thousand-ton freight trains are planned, since it is obvious that tourist traffic, even though it may be an important factor in the minds of the builders, cannot alone support the enterprise. The economic and financial benefits of the road are more important than the type of locomotive that will be used, for the water power in Morocco and the Niger may well be harnessed in the near future.

The cost of construction has been figured at two and one-half milliard paper francs. In the light of Belgium's experience in building a railway in the Congo, this expense seems justified; and the payment of German Reparations in kind will provide a large part of the material required. A railway connecting two such different provinces is almost bound to prove commercially successful. But M. Mahieu, as the President of the French Railway Council, does not allow his optimism to run away with him.

The most important freight carried will be cotton, oil, corn, and medicinal plants. The upper Senegal and the Niger are capable of producing an enormous amount of exports, and can alone supply the five hundred thousand tons of material a year that are necessary to meet expenses; and when we also consider the fifteen million natives living in French West Africa and the thirty millions in British Nigeria and Portuguese Guinea, the economic future of the Sahara railway appears highly encouraging.

Furthermore, according to M. Mahieu, English and Belgian exporters are already considering an extension of their lines to Lake Chad and the Congo, and thus the Sahara railway would furnish direct communication between Equatorial Africa and Brussels and London — at any rate for tourist traffic. Weeks of travel would be eliminated, which would benefit immeasurably the personnel and budget of the Colonial Administration. French colonial policy should not ignore the hypothesis that in the future Kamerun may be placed in the hands of some other Power than France, and the railway project should be undertaken with a view to the results that would follow if Italy or Germany were given this mandate.

Not the least serious drawback is the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fact that the Italians in North Africa fear new military perils from the South if the threat of a black army is actually realized. Members of the Left Wing parties mistrust every idea associated with Mangin or any other uniformed colonial politician. Furthermore, there is no doubt that two ministers in the present Cabinet — Albert Sarraut and Perrier, the Colonial Minister — have decided to oppose this scheme of André Tardieu's. Poincaré objects to calling in and consulting a private company to whom the State had guaranteed a capital of twenty million francs if the line were built. The letters between him and the Minister of Public Works propose solving the matter by having Parliament and technicians coöperate and decide where the road is to run.

Of the twelve million francs required for the preliminary work, the French Budget would provide four million, and Algeria, Morocco, Tunis, West Africa, and the three railway companies interested in the project the rest. It is hoped that in April 1929 matters will have progressed so far that the technical execution and the management of the Sahara road can be handed over to some concessionaire — probably one of the three railway companies. West Africa seems little inclined to be linked up with European traffic, and then will be the time for parliamentary and colonial opposition to come to a head.

WHAT IS A FASCIST? [3]

We knew what a Fascist was when a crowd of men in black shirts, who wanted to establish a new government, marched on Rome. That, however, was in 1922, and there are still Fascisti. What is a Fascist? What are these people doing? How do they differ from other Italians?

Is there a single answer to this question? Can we define a Fascist in the same way that we define a monist, a Protestant, or a Communist? Augusto Turati, the clever and energetic General Secretary of the Fascist Party, has announced that there is no answer to this question. In an introduction to a recent announcement of Mussolini's, written for the benefit of the numberless foreigners who come to Rome to study Fascism, he has said: 'In the last eight years we Fascisti have been more busy fighting and conquering than in building up a system.' This is a proud and Roman reply; but it is no answer. It dodges the issue, and merely implies: 'First and foremost, we want to conquer the capital. When that is accomplished, there will be time for us to decide what we wish to do next.'

Turati has also refused to draw any historic parallels or cite any historic precedents. Nevertheless, the Fascist experiment has been completed, and can only be understood in the light of Roman and Italian history, which has always been a history of personal courage and adventure. Since Julius Cæsar's day there has been no trace of a 'programme.' Cæsar merely said, 'Now I come,' and with these words leaped on his horse and crossed the Rubicon with his five thousand Italians behind him. They had no programme either, and could not possibly have said where they were going. Their only slogan was 'Long live Cæsar!' *Basta!*

We men of the North are the only ones who are always searching for ideas, systems, and programmes. According to Mommsen, Cæsar apparently represented the democratic nobility. In reality he was merely Cæsar, in contradistinction to Pompey, just as Mussolini to-day is utterly himself.

[3] By Victor Auburtin, in *Berliner Tageblatt* (Liberal daily), *February* 10

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

And so it has gone throughout history. Fifteen hundred years later those Florentine bankers, the Medicis, suddenly became grand dukes — no one knows why, they themselves least of all. A clever man shapes history to his own ends, provided he has a loud voice and impressive gestures.

And now Mussolini has stepped upon the scene. He discovered a slogan to touch off the discontent in the nation's heart, the discontent arising from a war victory that had turned to dust and ashes. He announced, 'We are on the march!' and they at once set forth, and now they are firmly established in Rome. It is an historical curiosity, a fantastic phenomenon. As Turati has said, the whole thing is the work of a single man.

The only programme the Fascisti had was enthusiastic phrases — 'Long live Italy!' 'Italy must be bigger!' And everybody repeated them. But if they do not know what they want, at least they know what they do not want, for they have a negative programme. This negative programme announces that Italy's misfortunes are due to the constitutional parties and to Parliament, the result being that newspaper articles now preach nothing but hatred for liberal democracy. All Fascist polemics are directed against this idea, and blame it for everything.

'Down with the teaching that a man exists apart from his country or in opposition to his country,' they say — forgetting that without this fight of the individual against the group humanity would have long ago sunk to the state of a beehive. This powerful, fanatical opposition to liberty is particularly remarkable owing to the fact that Italy was the country where the democratic and constitutional movements of the nineteenth century were born and flourished. The work of Garibaldi cannot be condemned simply because he was a Liberal and a Freemason.

The simplest thing that Europe can do is to let Fascism run its course and compromise with it. Fascism is a mighty society constructed by the hand of an organizing genius. It is a network of societies — *i fasci* — that are spread and coördinated throughout the country. Thus far it has contributed nothing to political history. To get a good picture of it let us turn to a simple dispatch in one of the Fascist newspapers, for all the newspapers are Fascist: —

'After the meeting of the Intersyndical Central Committee yesterday, the General Secretary repaired to the head of the Government at the Viminal, where a daily conference with the Duce takes place. He was informed about the discussions held yesterday at two long sessions of the National Directory in the Palazzo Littorio. First of all the investigation of the provincial situation was brought to a conclusion, and then the Directory attacked the revision of the Federal hierarchy. Only a few changes were necessary, since the whole provincial situation has been carefully analyzed during the last few years and twenty-five Federal secretaries have been engaged in its administration. The discussions of the Directory will be published in the official journal.'

As anyone can see, this is carefully worked out, and documents and papers of all kinds are piled high in that happy land. It must not be forgotten, however, that the police courts and the ministerial administrations of the country remain the same as under the old régime. Feverish activity has come over this whole people, at whose easy-going ways we used to marvel foolishly. Italy is thoroughly organized. And since even Fascisti are human beings, there are intrigues and decisions of all kinds. At the head of the whole organi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

zation stands the man with the face of stone, who is worshiped with religious reverence.

'Religious' is the word that best describes the present condition of Italy. Like the Calvinists in colonial North America, the Fascisti refer to themselves as Franciscans, but it is dangerous in our complicated time to compare them with such a powerful religious movement. The Franciscans dwelt in their mountain cloisters; they were not patriots, but brothers, and lived for God and Heaven. The Fascisti, too, are zealous, but they think less of Heaven than of the shimmering havens on the Adriatic; and in these havens there is a housing shortage. In the Middle Ages Heaven had been discovered, and Heaven was a very practical discovery then.

So far everything has gone well, and it seems that the anxiety of the early days of the régime has disappeared. Sir Austen Chamberlain, like many other Englishmen, admires Mussolini, and will stand by with good counsel in case of need.

How long will all this last? After Cæsar crossed the Rubicon the new régime continued for five hundred years, gradually changing into a government by the Prætorian Guard. We shall not attempt to prophesy so far ahead, but everyone can see that the Fascist Party is firmly established in the country, and everyone wishes this to be so. Almost everything is functioning in Italy except Parliament; and if the Italians do not need a Parliament, that is their own business. The Liberal Opposition has compromised itself out of existence, and no longer amounts to anything.

The Fascisti love to proclaim that all the world hates them and that Italy is surrounded by enemies. There is no doubt, however, that this is merely theatrical byplay to awaken the excitement of a naturally good-natured people. The name of Italy calls up too many memories and suggests too genial a tempo of life for the country to be capable of any real hate. Its wonderful language and its women are sufficient guaranties. Nevertheless, the romantic period is over, never to return. Whoever comes here with old-fashioned feelings about Italy will soon change his mind when he notices the business-like tone of the country. The Fascisti keep insisting that they have renounced our affections and would rather be feared than loved.

Can it be that the poor prospects for the tourist season have anything to do with these expressions of political opinion? The hotel keepers one questions on this point look thoughtful. They feel that good nature has its advantages; yet they are good patriots just the same.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

COMMAND OF THE SEAS[1]

BY GEORGE YOUNG

COMMAND of the Seas is the converse of Freedom of the Seas — but it is also its complement. Command of the Seas has been a principle of the British policy ever since the institution of the United Kingdom. Freedom of the Seas has been a principle of American policy ever since the independence of the United States. These two policies are distinguished in international law as respectively the rights of belligerents and the rights of neutrals, which looks like a distinction as definite as that between war and peace. Moreover, in defense of these respective policies both countries have engaged in continual controversies and occasional conflicts. And yet there is fundamentally, and in fact, no real difference between the two. They are just different aspects and attitudes. And the argument here advanced is that at the present moment, when Anglo-American naval 'insurances' in sea power approach parity, and their economic interests in sea power approach par, there is no essential difference in their naval policy, whether as belligerents or as neutrals. In short, this article might as correctly have been headed 'Anglo-American Freedom of the Seas.'

All our impressions of the antagonism between British and Americans as to the Law of the Seas are based on the controversies of international lawyers and on the collisions between the two countries in crises like the War of Independence, the Napoleonic Wars, the Civil War, and the Great War. But these political issues were ephemeral, and there is nothing essential in the ideas of what we call 'international law.' Indeed, the history of sea power shows that the regulation and restriction of war at sea have not been guaranteed by the sanctity or sanctions of any system of codes, customs, or cases, or even by a *consensus gentium*, but purely by the policy of the sea Powers, and by their belligerent or neutral pressure. Whenever the pinch has come, belligerent sea power has ignored 'international law' as to neutral rights, in proportion to its own war necessity and to the menace of war from injured neutral sea Powers.

The lawyer, Mr. Asquith, in announcing (March 1, 1915) to Parliament the maritime 'reprisals' that were in effect an illegal blockade, said: 'We are not going to allow our efforts to be strangled in a network of juridical niceties . . . under existing conditions there is no form of economic pressure to which we do not consider ourselves entitled to resort.' He thereby merely echoed what, under much the same conditions, the diplomat Queen Elizabeth said to a foreign ambassador (1597): 'For your part, you seem to us to have read many books but yet to have little understanding of politics. For where you so often make mention of the Law of Nations you must know that in time of war between kings it is lawful for the one to intercept aids and

[1] From the *Contemporary Review* (London Liberal monthly), *March*

Publication rights in America controlled by the Leonard Scott Publication Company

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

succors to the other and to care that no damage accrue to himself.'

So much for the derogation or denunciation in war of 'juridical niceties' like the Declarations of Paris and London. Nevertheless, in periods of peace national leaders and international lawyers treat these derogations as exceptions proving the rule, and then turn again to international law as a means of regulating, restricting, and preventing war. Whereas the assumption that even the Declaration of Paris is 'international law' seems questionable — seeing that it was not approved by progressive opinion of that day; is not signed by America, now one of the leading naval powers; has never been fully applied in any subsequent war; and has now been made obsolete, practically, by new forms of warfare. And where a matter so vital to us as sea power is concerned we cannot rely on these legal fictions. We must face the facts.

The facts of the case are, first, that regulation of the seas in war, whether it be called 'freedom' or 'command,' is not the result of any system or sanction of international law, and that the rules as to the rights of neutrals and belligerents are mere makeshifts to meet the political situation. Secondly, that the Great War not only swept away all this system of legal fictions, but also set up a new series of naval facts by extending warfare at sea from surface war into underwater and overhead warfare. Which makes necessary a new set of rules. And, thirdly, that as we excluded from the peace settlement such a revision of these rules as the Americans required, they are now challenging our Command of the Seas and claiming to establish Freedom of the Seas by their own sea power.

We are, therefore, to-day faced with the following choices. Either we must fight for our supremacy, first in an armaments competition and finally in an armed conflict — as we did in the case of Germany. Or we must let the wealthier Americans outbuild and outbid us in sea-power as we outbuilt and outbid the Dutch. Or we must come to terms with the Americans.

It may shock some that an Anglo-American war should be coolly discussed. But we must face the facts of the past and the facts of the present. One such fact is that our only war with the United States, as an independent state, was on this issue in a far less vital form. Another is that in the last war the United States only fought on our side and not against us for her traditional policy of Freedom of the Seas because German destruction of commerce was more disagreeable to her and derogatory to it than the commerce diversion of the British. Another is that this alliance against German sea piracy ended with the Armistice, and that we are now far advanced in a competition for sea power between the United Kingdom and the United States. And a final fact is that we are to-day no further off from war with America than we were from war with Germany when the Haldane negotiations for the limitation of Anglo-German naval armaments broke down just as Anglo-American disarmament has done. Indeed, the present situation is even more serious. Germany, our neighbor across the North Sea, our natural ally and associate, and our kindred in race with a common culture, was challenging our supremacy in sea power and our superiority as carriers, colonizers, and capitalists. But Germany was not even aspiring to anything more than equality in economic competition, and was accepting inferiority in naval strength. Whereas America will, in ten years, have equality in naval strength, and already has superiority as a capitalist. America is

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

our neighbor across the Atlantic, our natural ally and associate and our racial first cousin, and shares with us not only a culture but also a literature and a language. On both sides of the Atlantic hands would be held up in horror at the idea of war. But then so they would have been twenty years ago on both sides of the North Sea at the idea of an Anglo-German war. And what prospect is there that, when it comes to be generally realized that we are being ousted from that command of the seas which we have always been taught was a matter of life and death to us, we shall let it go without a struggle?

Shall we rather not look on Uncle Sam as

> A cutpurse of the empire and the rule,
> That from a shelf the precious diadem stole,
> And put it in his pocket.

It is useless for the American Government to protest that in its naval programme now before Congress there is no intention of competing with us. It may succeed in getting a Congress to put no time limit on construction in response to our Government's suspension of the British cruisers, but the press on both sides has a sound sense of the situation. Says their *World:* —

> This programme challenges in an unmistakable fashion the ancient prerogative of British sea power. . . . To-day both nations are drifting aimlessly in dangerous waters. Both are without political leaders whose imagination is competent to regulate this difficulty before it becomes unmanageable.

And if the American is bruising our heel of Achilles, we are treading on his tenderest toe. His claim to supremacy over the two Americas has no better justification to-day than our claim to rule the two Atlantics. A century ago, when European empires were all a-blowing and a-growing in the Americas, the Monroe Doctrine had a basis and was a bargain. 'We keep out of Europe, you keep out of America.' 'Trespassers will be prosecuted.' But to-day American capital and commerce are even more in control of Europe than of South America. And the imperialistic implications of the Monroe Doctrine are as vast and vague as those of our sea power. At the moment, the United States is penetrating or policing Nicaragua just as we are China. And that not against a European empire, but against a local popular movement backed by a rival — Mexico; just as our intervention is against the same sort of movement backed by a rival — Russia. The only European empire that still has a footing in the Americas is ours, and we are next-door neighbors in Canada and the West Indies. The Americans have, in turn, ejected all other European states — the French, the Russians, and quite lately the Spanish; in this last case by war. They have fought the Canadians more than once, and it is only the combination of British sea supremacy and Anglo-Saxon solidarity that has kept the two peoples at peace for a century. If these two links go, Canada and the West Indies will go too, in so far as our imperial sovereignty is concerned, either by war or by some transaction. For the Rush-Bagot agreement will then no longer avail against the Monroe Doctrine.

It is useless for us to claim that sea power is vital to us and transatlantic supremacy not so to the Americans — that our maritime dominance is not imperialist and their Monroe Doctrine is. The American rulers are Anglo-Saxons like ourselves, with the same capacity for sentimental self-humbug and for cynical self-help.

Moreover, besides these vital issues and national ideals, there are to-day as many rivalries between British and American 'interests' as there were

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

between British and German before the war. Take only one example — that burning question of oil. The oil supply of the world, outside the Soviet sources, is now organized in two combines, one British, the other American. Their competition has now come to a crisis in their dispute for the Soviet surplus, and the recent success of the Americans has secured them supremacy in the Asiatic markets, including India. The influence of these combines over governmental policy on both sides of the Atlantic is as obvious as it is obscure. And if this influence contributed, as seems probable, to the recent rupture of British official relations with the Soviet Union, it may well under the conditions now developing contribute to a rupture of relations with the United States. To which might be added, were there space, many other Anglo-American business rivalries that are making today the same sort of bad feeling that preceded and prepared our war with Germany. One more example only will be given. Our mercantile marine has had hitherto a monopoly of the carrying trade between India and America. This monopoly the United States Shipping Board is now challenging by running its subsidized vessels on this route at unremunerative rates. American state trading is thus attacking the shipping interests that hold our Empire together. Which British business thinks unfair. And though competition is no doubt desirable against these oil and shipping combines, yet it is no wonder that Americans are already more anathema to our ruling class than ever Germans were.

Nor is this surprising when you reflect that, in charging us a war-debt annuity of many millions, our American allies are making us pay not only for having driven the German cruisers and carriers off the sea on their behalf, but also for driving our own off the sea at their behest. This effect of the debt settlement is as yet clearly realized only by a few, and those few are all of the political party responsible for that settlement. But a silent resentment is spreading through the British ruling class, all the more dangerous that it is as yet confined to the City, the clubs, the *petits comités*, the Civil Service, the expert committees — in short, to the extraconstitutional regions in which our British foreign policy is framed before Parliament and public opinion are seized of it. And it is in this region that all our wars have begun. No doubt when the danger became imminent the real relationship between the two people would be expressed by the British workers, even to the point of a passive resistance that would cost the rank and file their employment and their leaders imprisonment under the new Trades-Union Penal Act. For they would go farther and faster to stop a war with America than they went in 1919 to stop a war with Russia. Such a war would also possibly be resisted by the American intellectuals of the Eastern States under peril of their persons and property from hundred-per-cent compatriots. But would such protests avail against a press propaganda on either side driving the ordinary public into war passion and panic? For both sides would have much more material for an Anglo-American war *hetze* than there was for the working up of the Anglo-German war fever.

Therefore, unless we mean to resign command of the sea without an effort, or unless we mean to face a fight which would probably end in our losing that and also our carrying trade and colonies, we must combine with the Americans in a common naval policy. And the preceding pages have shown that this is no difficult matter so far as principle is concerned. For, so far from

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there being any real difference in principle between Command of the Seas and Freedom of the Seas, the former is the only material 'sanction' for the latter, and the latter the only moral sanction for the former. The line between the two, as has been said, shifts with the political situation. Under a balance of sea power in a period of peace it shifts in favor of Freedom of the Seas and International Law. Under a supremacy of sea power and in a phase of general war it shifts in favor of Command of the Seas. But the only security and sanction for an international Law of the Seas is still one or more national navies. There is not yet, and there may never be, a supremacy of sea power so complete that it can administer a sovereignty of the seas as did the Roman Empire. The moral authority of a League of Nations, which will be something between that of the mediæval Papacy and that of an international Prize Court, will not offer sufficient security to a people like ourselves, dependent on the sea for food, fuel, and every form of activity. Those who visualize a League disposing of a naval force are 'Leaguist' visionaries who do a disservice to the cause of peace and who expose their country to disaster in war. Those, on the other hand, who would 'scrap the navy' and accept in return 'scraps of paper' such as all-in judicial arbitration treaties, an international Prize Court, and a Declaration of London, are little better than 'legalist' voluptuaries. All these institutions have no doubt an importance for establishing and elaborating a judicature and jurisprudence of the seas. But the only sanction is, and must remain, sea power.

We come, therefore, at last, to the point for which we have been steering since the first page. The only security that we ourselves could accept other than that of our own command of the seas is that of an Anglo-American agreement to maintain on the high seas navies of equal strength which in combination could cope with any other possible combination — in short, an 'armed neutrality.' And that secured, we could then accept agreements with other states for the neutralization of the narrow seas that would enable them to reduce their armaments — in short, 'Rush-Bagot' agreements.

There are plenty of historic precedents for such a policy in the naval leagues and armed neutralities of the past. One example is enough. The principle of the Rush-Bagot arrangement, as proclaimed by John Quincy Adams to Congress (56th, 1st Sess.) and approved by the Senate, is that disarmament is the only practical preventive of war. What Mr. Adams wrote to Lord Castlereagh a century ago as to Anglo-American armed forces on the Great Lakes is equally true to-day of their antagonism on the high seas: 'It is evident that if each party augments its forces with a view to obtaining an ascendancy over the other vast expense will be incurred and the danger of a collision correspondingly augmented.'

What is the proper procedure for seeking peace by the way of an Anglo-American naval agreement open to accession by other sea Powers? In the first place we must now, on our part, loyally accept as the basis of such agreement the American policy of Freedom of the Seas as defined in the second of President Wilson's Fourteen Points. In fact, that stone which as peace-builders we rejected must become the head of our Anglo-American corner in peace at sea. We must accept 'absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

international action for the enforcement of international covenants.'

What prospect is there of getting an agreement for an Anglo-American Armed Neutrality that would secure the British a fair insurance in Command of the Seas and the Americans a fair assurance of Freedom of the Seas? The answer seems to be that the principal difficulties of such an agreement in the past are now disappearing. British insistence on naval superiority has had to yield to hard facts. American objections to such accords as being 'entangling alliances' or 'undesirable commitments' are yielding to force of circumstances. Moreover, such an agreement with us would be only a preliminary to a general agreement for that revision of sea law that is a canon of American policy. And the guaranty to be given to that new law would be confined to waters accessible to American warships and would carry no commitments to European affairs. Nor is there any infringement of the Senate's constitutional prerogatives in agreements to reduce armaments or arrangements for the revision of international law. Any legislation that might be required would be in line with the Outlawry of War movement and would be left to Congress. And if an atmosphere of confidence could be substituted for the too angular Anglo-Saxon attitudes hitherto affected on either side, neither Republicans nor Democrats, Conservatives nor Laborites, would have much difficulty with partisan opposition or public opinion.

But there would still be difficulties with patriots. The British would have, in the first place, to realize fully that their naval supremacy is gone and recognize frankly that 'parity' with America gives them all the security required, whether as belligerents or neutrals. As yet our admirals represent too large a body of British opinion when they write (*Times*, July 6, 1927): 'We insist on that number of cruisers. If America insists on building to parity, that is her affair. But it would not be an act of good will.'

Americans on their side must realize that their new command of the seas will make it even more impossible for them to keep out of European wars in the future. As it is, they have been forced into every general European war since their independence; and their best chance of keeping out of the next is to overcome their secular suspicion of us and to associate with us in an armed neutrality that can keep the peace. But at present their mayors represent too large a body of American opinion when they talk of 'making King George keep his snoot out of Chicago.' And, apart from the mollification of such giants, there are still difficulties of policy.

On the British side there is still a strong prejudice against revival of this second of the President's Fourteen Points, and on the American side a strong prejudice against any approach to the League. Now this Second Point was the first pillar of the President's temple of peace. Which means that the British will have formally to renounce the right of independent blockade instead of, as now, tacitly recognizing that in future it will be impossible to enforce it without American approval. While the Americans will have formally to recognize that Freedom of the Seas and sea law cannot be guaranteed without an Anglo-American Convention which will have to be brought into relation with the Covenant of the League.

That first step taken, the second is naval disarmament. Instead of politicians protesting that an Anglo-American war is unthinkable, while their professional advisers are bound to think of nothing else; instead of peace

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

conferences, like that of The Hague in 1907, which exclude naval disarmaments, — the real road to peace, — or naval disarmament conferences which are exploited by experts for juggling over cruiser tonnages and gun elevations, as at Geneva in 1927, or for jockeyings with Singapore docks and building programmes as at Washington in 1921, there might be a real disarmament for a real reason, as there was of the British war fleet after the defeat of Germany. The basic principle of such a disarmament might then be an Anglo-American parity, not of tonnage, but of annual expenditure, leaving each party to expend its quota as it pleased; which would eliminate the experts. The third step then becomes the extension of such sea security to other states as would enable them to disarm and thereby allow a further disarmament of the Anglo-American armed neutrality. This security could be given them by 'Rush-Bagot agreements' neutralizing the narrow seas under guaranty of the littoral states and of an 'armed neutrality' to which they would accede. For example, the Baltic, North Sea, Channel, Black Sea, Ægean, Adriatic, might all thus be closed to all belligerencies. Thereafter the fourth step — the reconstruction of international regulation of war at sea — becomes comparatively simple. And the final stage will be to bring this new conventional and codified international law under the sanction, not only of the combined fleets, but also of the combined states, in a reorganized League to which America could accede.

Each of these stages is a subject for an article in itself. But it is suggested that even thus summarized as a series of assertions they seem to be a logical line of least resistance for getting ourselves out of a very bad fix.

But if we are going to secure an agreement on a basis of equal naval strength there is no time to be lost. The present phase in which the Americans offer us parity will not last long. It is the result of a balance of power in America between, on the one side, an economist plutocracy and a pacifist public opinion, and, on the other side, navalist ideals and imperialist interests. The latter are still immature, but are steadily getting stronger. If once they secure supremacy in sea power they will not again surrender it. Patriotic sentiment, to which Americans are even more susceptible than ourselves, will then cause national policy to become one of Command of the Seas for the establishment and enforcement of Freedom of the Seas. The American Navy will then be praying, as does the British to-day, that 'they may be a security for all such as pass on the seas upon their lawful occasions' — but as to the legality of those occasions the judge will be the President, not King George.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE WAR-GUILT CONSPIRACY MYTH[1]

BY G. HANOTAUX

[THIS article is preceded by the following preface in the *Revue de Deux Mondes:* 'The campaign to free Germany and the Emperor William from responsibility for the war is being ardently pursued in the United States. A book by Mr. Robert L. Owen, former United States Senator from Oklahoma, entitled *The Russian Imperial Conspiracy, 1892–1914*, has just appeared, and develops the following thesis: The Franco-Russian Alliance was nothing more nor less than a machination prepared long in advance with the object of unloosing a general European war in order to realize Russian ambitions in Constantinople and the Balkans. M. G. Hanotaux is particularly well qualified to refute this thesis by showing the eminently pacific and defensive character of the Franco-Russian Alliance.' M. Hanotaux is a member of the French Academy, a commander of the Legion of Honor, a former Minister of Foreign Affairs, and the author of numerous historical works, including *Histoire de la guerre de 1914*.]

THE most striking thing about ex-Senator Robert L. Owen's book is that, although he prides himself on his impartiality, his criticism of the origins of the war presents all the arguments favorable to Germany and Austria with obvious complacency, whereas the rôle of the Allies, the friends of America, is depicted in a spirit of vilification. The result is that all the injustices seem to have fallen on one side and all the perverse designs seem to have originated on the other.

Such a line of argument vividly recalls the famous propaganda engineered by Germany in the United States at the beginning of the war — propaganda so exaggerated that it finally reacted against its authors. It is the same story here. Such evident prejudice removes all force of persuasion from the work. It is an advocate's plea, not a judge's verdict.

Mr. Robert L. Owen declares he is not an historian. This declaration was not necessary, for it is at once obvious that he has the worst possible grasp of the facts with which he deals. This singular advocate has not even consulted the legal documents that were communicated to him, but accepts his clients' allegations as they stand.

The thesis of the former senator is not new. He has borrowed it from well-known German books that have been already refuted, books by Stieve and Siebert, to say nothing of certain French polemics, all of which have been summed up and published in the United States by Mr. Harry Elmer Barnes. In attempting to fix war guilt, the new system no longer consists in confining one's self, as the first polemics did, to an examination of the events that accompanied or immediately followed the assassination of the Archduke Ferdinand. The new method embraces a wider field and delves much farther back into the past. The tragic assassination would merely be inter-

[1] From the *Revue de Deux Mondes* (Liberal literary semimonthly), *January* 15

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

preted as the spark that lit the bonfire. The war itself was merely the consequence and the wished-for result of a long and powerful machination on the part of France and Russia, whose complicity dates back to the conclusion of the Alliance between the two countries more than twenty years before the war. It would, therefore, be necessary to accept the extraordinary thesis that two or three generations of politicians belonging to the most varied political parties had given their word both in Russia and France to pursuing with incredible persistence a crime of *lèse humanité*.

Such is the great discovery now put forth in a new form to deceive and seduce American opinion. Before developing this thesis, did Mr. Owen make an attempt to investigate the affirmations that were handed to him and to support them with any general study of the subject? Did he prepare an exact table of what happened in Europe during the twenty years before the war? Did he investigate the texts he quotes or the numerous incidents that they produced? Has he, in a word, cast a ray of clear light on the point of view he has assumed? Not at all. On the contrary, if anything distinguishes his book from its forerunners, it is an incredible ignorance of realities. To show how little credence he deserves, we shall confine ourselves to pointing out only a few of the extraordinary lacunæ that appear in his thesis and that are sufficient to ruin it.

In the first place, Mr. Owen entirely ignores Bismarck. The falsification of the dispatch from Ems, the seizure of Alsace-Lorraine, the great imperialist and military manœuvres of Prussia, who despoiled feeble Denmark, bullied Austria since 1866, revolutionized Germany, suppressed and murdered Poland, and thus violently established an hegemony in Europe that finally became insupportable to everyone — all this counts for nothing in his eyes.

And later, when this same policy, pursued with diabolic genius, cast Austria loose from Germany, indicating, almost imposing upon her, by way of compensation, the progressive conquest of the Balkans, of Bosnia and Herzegovina, of Novibazar, of Servia, Albania, Macedonia, and Saloniki, a conquest that was to set Europe aflame — all this receives no consideration at Mr. Owen's hands. The policy pursued for more than a century by Germany's accomplice, Austria, the policy that led to the war of 1914, he entirely suppresses — it is all very simple.

In his eyes history begins with the Franco-Russian Alliance. But how is it possible to understand and make other people understand the character of this alliance without indicating its causes — in other words, the offensive that German ambition, and later Austrian ambition, took against all of Europe? How can the Triple Alliance, which Bismarck had premeditated for so long and in which he took such pride, be left out of the discussion? The Triple Alliance was concluded long before the Franco-Russian Alliance. It was at its apogee in 1887, when it was transformed into an offensive pact. According to the word of the great man himself, this gradually matured policy had as an objective 'throwing the Germanic world against the Slavic world.' The admission of this deliberately assumed position of attack — a position that was accepted with a joyful heart — would alone suffice to annihilate Mr. Owen's thesis. It solves the question that crops up in every controversy: Who started it?

Now let us return to the Franco-Russian Alliance. Does Mr. Owen take the trouble to study its text, its character, its applications, since to him it represents the initial document of the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

famous conspiracy? Not at all. He affects to ignore, and he perhaps does ignore, the fact that it was always expressly defensive. In any case, he refuses to recognize that, in the exchange of views that followed the sealing of the agreement and constantly recurred afterward, it was always, always stipulated that the Alliance left out of consideration Russia's affairs in the Orient, Constantinople, and the Balkans, that it expressly opposed any enterprise undertaken by Russia in this part of the world, and that in consequence, far from fomenting Russian ambitions in this direction, it quieted and immobilized them by the most formal provisions. Two or three of the many texts on this subject would be enough to illuminate this whole important point.

When the military pact, the first clause in the Alliance, was concluded, in August 1892, the French Minister of War, M. de Freycinet, wrote to M. de Montebello, the French Ambassador in St. Petersburg, saying very properly: 'If the Russian Government should raise, as it might, the question of applying the convention in case of a war with Austria alone, General de Boisdeffre [the signer of the convention] has formal instructions from myself, Freycinet, not to follow Russia upon this terrain. . . . MM. de Freycinet and Ribot are convinced that public opinion in France would not permit us to engage ourselves in so remote a theatre of war.'

When the agreement was later transformed into an alliance, I was Minister of Foreign Affairs. I then held official conversations with Prince Lobanov, Chancellor of the Russian Empire, which definitely excluded all prospects of French aid in Russian Oriental policy. These exchanges of opinion, so definite and categorical, which obtained the formal adhesion of the eminent Russian statesman, are to be found in my *Histoire de la guerre*. They were repeated on many occasions — first, officially, at the moment the agreement was made in 1897, in a letter that I addressed to our Ambassador, M. de Montebello, from which the following most characteristic passage is quoted: —

'I believed it was my duty to speak to M. de Mohrenheim [the Russian Ambassador] of the situation in the Orient. I told him that if a conflict was going to break out over the Black Sea and the Straits, our country would be in no way disposed to take active part in the military events that might follow, since the risks would be so great and the advantages for France so slight. The Russian Ambassador agreed with me, and told me that he was too familiar with public opinion on this matter to have any illusions about it.'

An official letter relates further conversations that I had on the same subject with Count Muraviev, successor to Prince Lobanov: 'I recalled to him the real character of this policy, which consists of the obstinate maintenance of a defensive attitude, and of the abstention on the part of either ally in any separate initiative undertaken by the other. "Germany will urge you on in the Straits and at Constantinople," I added. "She has already offered the Bosporus, — which costs her nothing, — first to Prince Lobanov and then to the Emperor Nicholas. But take care! Germany is an expert tempter. You would have our diplomatic support. But have no illusions about our military assistance. The true service that we should render to Russia would consist in observing neutrality, which would oblige Germany to do the same."'

It is clear where the temptation came from. Always from Germany. It is also clear where counsels of wisdom

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that kept referring to the character of the Alliance came from. Always from France. How can anyone say now that the Alliance was a conspiracy working for war, when its authors kept returning to its essential purpose — peace? See, then, how the chief allegation of Mr. Owen's thesis collapses. Its base is destroyed, since it falsifies the real character of the Franco-Russian Alliance and presents it in a light that is absolutely foreign to its principles.

Is Mr. Owen better informed when he discusses the rôle of the Franco-Russian Alliance in European history up to 1914? Omitting a thousand details in which his discussion becomes embarrassed with secondary controversies, let us ask two decisive questions in order to come to closer grips with this thesis of conspiracy: (1) Where, during these twenty years, is the spirit of aggression to be found? (2) Where, at the critical hour, was the will to aggression? When we have pointed out the omissions Mr. Owen has made on these two points, we shall have finished with his thesis and his book.

Where was the spirit of aggression? Not in France, even on the word of Mr. Owen himself, who puts all the blame on Russia and on her Ambassador, Isvolskii. Mr. Owen, however, cannot ignore that immediately after the conclusion of the Alliance Russia approached Austria and concluded with her an arrangement for reciprocal disinterestedness in the Balkans (May 5 to 17, 1897). This arrangement, known to diplomacy as the Muerzsteg Agreement, was renewed and confirmed in 1904 by a neutrality agreement stipulating that the two Powers, 'united by identical views on the conservative policy to be followed in the Balkan countries, would assist each other in case any other Power should try to disturb the status quo.' This friendly agreement governed Russo-Austrian relations for years.

Who violated it? Everyone knows it was violated by the Austrian minister, Baron Aehrenthal, who, as Ambassador to Russia, knew the weakness of that Empire after the Russo-Japanese War. He exceeded the solemn engagements of his country and brutally annexed Bosnia and Herzegovina, which Bismarck at the Congress of Berlin had allowed Austria to occupy on a flimsy excuse.

The engagement concluded between the two empires was thus broken, and Austria had made a decisive step to the detriment of the Slavic peoples in her plan of conquest directed against the Balkans. Russia, slapped in the face, took the affront and the injurious violation of the agreement in silence. She knew that the least movement on her part would start a war, in which Germany would back Austria to the limit. The German Chancellor, Prince von Bülow, solemnly proclaimed this when he said: 'Germany has thrown her sword into the balance.' In this event, in this real point of departure of the future war, where was the spirit of aggression? Who can doubt that it was found in Vienna and Berlin?

The spirit of provocation was so strong at this time, especially on the part of Emperor William, that Baron Holstein, the Emperor's most faithful adviser, wrote a letter in 1906 (published in 1919 by the *Süddeutsche Monatshefte*) that contained the following passage: 'There is only one way of preventing certain future dangers. It is absolutely necessary to oppose firmly all useless provocation. All provocations originate with the Emperor or are calculated to please him. Not only abroad, but in Germany as well, is there increasing anxiety in the presence of this autocrat.'

So much for the spirit of aggression.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Was it on the side of the Franco-Russian Alliance, always reserved, prudent, and pacific, or with the Central Empires, who continually showed themselves audacious, provocative, and animated by the spirit of war?

The will to aggression (in other words, the formal resolution to solve the Balkan difficulties by force of arms) — where was that to be found on the eve of the war? There can be no doubt on this score. Again it is on the side of Austria, pursuing her plan of conquest, and backed up to the limit, without any spirit of conciliation or moderation, by Germany. Documents from the Roman archives throw blinding light on this point.

The war against Servia that started the war of 1914 Austria-Hungary had resolved to declare as long ago as April 1913 — in other words, more than a year before the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand. Austria was determined to carry out the programme of extension in the Balkan Peninsula that Prussia had offered to make up for her expulsion from Germany. Ever since April she had also resolved to take up arms and run the risk of bringing about a general war. Here again there is no question of an hypothesis or of a deduction drawn from simple appearances. It is a patent fact. The truth is that an official proposition was submitted at this time by the Vienna Cabinet to the Cabinet in Rome that would lead to sudden and common action against Servia.

Signor de San Giuliano was then Minister of Foreign Affairs at Rome. He promptly warned Signor Giolitti, who was away at the time, in these words: 'Merey [the Austrian Ambassador] told me officially in Berchtold's name that the latter believed the moment had come for Austria and Italy to agree upon a common line of action in order to work together solidly and as equals. Austria and Italy might work for a European mandate, such a mandate not to be limited only to the eventual occupation of Scutari, but also to apply to any Balkan state that would rebel against the wishes of Europe in regard to the northern or southern frontiers of Albania.'

Recourse to a so-called European mandate was pure fiction, since all evidence leads us to conclude that neither Russia nor the other Powers would consent to it. We find here simultaneous and unprovoked aggression, an alliance of brigandage submitted to Italy, and it was in this light that Italy understood it. On the ninth of August, 1913, Signor de San Giuliano telegraphed to M. Giolitti: 'Austria has communicated to us and to Germany her intention to act against Servia.'

Italy had the honesty and wisdom not to lend her hand to this crime against peace and humanity, and it was this atrociously audacious step that put an end to the Triple Alliance.

One year later Archduke Ferdinand was assassinated under circumstances that remain obscure. Austria this time seized the opportunity. Hurling herself forward with lowered head into an enterprise that she had decided upon long in advance, she addressed to Servia the ultimatum whose consequences everyone knows. And what is more, she received in these decisive days the full and complete assistance of Germany. The latter did not hesitate.

Where is the will to aggression? Where do we find the long-standing conspiracy? Where is the policy of conquest, invasion, and provocation, as Baron Holstein defined it? And what becomes of the famous Franco-Russian conspiracy that has been so pompously launched in America by Senator Owen, in the face of truth, history, and justice?

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

TOWARD A NEW BALANCE OF POWER[1]

EUROPE SETTLES DOWN

HANDS ACROSS THE RHINE[1]

MIGHTY currents hide beneath the surface of our daily life. Masters of our destiny, they shape it according to a plan of which we are able to alter at will only insignificant details. Our pride is placated by the permission to look upon these details as important events. These thoughts come to us when we consider what is taking place in Europe to-day. For, while politicians go on practising their bouncing tricks, the affairs of the Continent are being moved, as if by an irresistible force, toward the realization of a destiny the lines of which, like those of a figure about to be unveiled, we can sense through the mist of the future.

The continents which surround the Atlantic Ocean are emerging as the dominion of the white race. Europe in this dominion forms a unit; Europe, indeed, must form a unit. Otherwise her peoples cannot hold their own in the economic struggle with the exuberant growth of the United States. The necessary unity of Europe cannot be achieved without British participation. But the preliminary condition for a united front is a full understanding between Germany and France. In spite of preconceived notions and cross-purposes, in spite of difficulties which to the majority of people appear yet as insuperable, a sustained impulse is carrying the two countries toward agreement, and no obstacle seems great enough to arrest this movement toward a predestined end. This we see in the question of the security of France.

The traditional view on French security, as laid down in the Treaty of Versailles, is that Germany must be disarmed. This conception leads to the demand for the destruction of those German industries which serve, or which can serve, the purposes of war. In practice the demand could not be complied with, because it was found that a clear-cut division does not exist between potential war industries and those necessary to a nation in time of peace. Evidently Germany could not be disarmed in this sense.

By inertia people continue to discuss the destruction of 'war industries,' and, curiously enough, it was reserved for the Soviet tsars by their propaganda at Geneva last year to expose the futility of the scheme. For ridicule kills, and Moscow's offer to get rid of all its 'war industries' within a year shows that in this direction the road toward disarmament leads into a blind alley. But, because the unity so needed by Europe must be preceded by an agreement between Germany and France, and because this agreement cannot be reached without giving to France first a feeling of security, things cannot be allowed to remain in this unsatisfactory state, and a different solution for the problem of war industries must be found. Indeed, we believe that it has

[1] By 'Augur,' in the *Fortnightly Review* (London critical and literary monthly), *March*

American publication rights controlled by the Leonard Scott Publication Company

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

been discovered already: the shuttle of history has started its to and fro, busily weaving a mesh of events, so that one day, quite suddenly, we shall be confronted with the finished material. We have in mind the process of fusion between essential French and German industries which has now begun.

To speak about the interdependence of German coal and French iron is to state a commonplace, and there is no doubt that on both sides of the Rhine essential industries are grouped containing elements which complete each other. Bismarck was one of the first to have the vision of the advantages of this industrial unity. But in his time people thought only in terms of political dependence, and had not grasped the fact that economics wipes out frontiers. The French march into the Ruhr in 1923 was the last attempt to make union by force. Now the time has arrived when different methods must be employed. The French industrial magnates were forced by the Allied victory in 1918 to think about ways and means for coming to a working arrangement with their German colleagues. For Alsace-Lorraine — the redeemed land — had been endowed during the German captivity with a metallurgical industry, which now found itself cut off from the Reich and driven to compete with old French firms in the home market.

The schemes proposed in the first years after the war coupled Franco-German economic coöperation with the payment of Reparations. Some of them went so far as to envisage a direct French participation in the capital of German industry to replace Reparations payments. But political passion was running too high, and nothing came of the Loucheur-Rathenau Agreement and of several other similar schemes. The two questions became separated, when the Dawes Plan, coming after the Ruhr occupation, settled the Reparations issue for the time being.

After this the conversations were transferred to the economic plane exclusively. The first result was the conclusion in the spring of 1926 of the Potash Agreement for the pooling of interests in what now constitutes practically a Franco-German monopoly. In September of the same year the much more important Iron Pact was concluded. This agreement, which will need adjustment in view of the experience gained by its practical application, includes the metallurgical interests of Belgium and Luxemburg, and lays the foundations of a gigantic European combine for the regulation of production and prices to an unprecedented degree. In 1927 we saw the completion of an agreement between the electrical industries of the two countries, and in December of the same year a Franco-German Chemical Trust came into being. The latter, so we understand, is built up on a scheme of mutual participation of a closer nature than that of the Iron Pact.

In this manner in the last two years a movement toward a Franco-German coöperation in essential industries has set in. Apparently it has not reached yet its culminating point. But we see that the three essential products used by modern agriculture — potash, phosphates, and nitrates — are tied into one bundle of interests following the example of iron, coal, and steel.

Potential war industries in Germany have not been destroyed, as was originally intended. On the contrary, they have become a first-class factor in the economic situation of Europe. Their alliance with similar undertakings to the west of the Rhine creates in France the same feeling of security which was to have been the result of exactly opposite

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

measures. This seeming paradox is the consequence of the growing conviction in France that, if essential industries in the two countries are interlinked by a constantly increasing network of interests, the danger of war becomes very remote. We are witnessing a chain of events which prove that, in the pursuit of an end important to its existence, humanity is not deterred by the failure of a scheme; for the plan that failed another is substituted and the constructive work goes on. As a first step toward a full agreement between France and Germany a sense of security is on the way to being established. But instead of the destruction of potential war industries we see their consolidation into a powerful aggregate — the nucleus of an amalgamation covering the Continent. In view of the need of opposing the American giant the new way is the better one, and Europe in the long run will be thankful for the difficult times which held up the realization of the original plans of the post-war period. From the point of view of British interests, however, it is necessary to watch the course of events so that our industries may not find themselves one day helpless between the millstones of American and European competition.

A Franco-German economic rapprochement brings in its wake political changes. Not yet apparent to the general public, they are visible to political observers, who are watching the direction in which the new wind is blowing steadily. The softening of the French attitude toward Germany is beyond doubt. The last speeches of Herr Stresemann and of M. Briand are symptomatic in this respect. M. Briand's retort to Herr Stresemann's stout assertion of Germany's right to claim immediate evacuation of the Rhineland is weak if compared with utterances to which we have been accustomed previously by M. Poincaré and other ministers. It is as if M. Briand knew exactly that Herr Stresemann's speech was meant for domestic consumption only, before an election. M. Briand also insisted on the fact that, after all, the evacuation of the Rhineland was a question not for France alone, but for her Allies too. This may be easily taken as an invitation to British policy to force the not unwilling hand of France. But we have said before that Sir Austen Chamberlain and M. Briand have admitted Germany's moral right to evacuation. Only the decision on this point has been deferred by amicable arrangement with Herr Stresemann until after the French and German elections. In fact, we have reason to say that Herr Stresemann prefers to see the evacuation delayed, so that if, as he expects, the elections go toward the Left he need not divide this plum with his present Nationalist colleagues, of whom he is tired.

The *Times* has expressed the view that the occupation of the Rhineland has ceased to be of military importance, the French looking upon it only as a card to play in the complicated game of economic adjustments for the ultimate revision of the Dawes Plan. We share this view entirely. Above all, there is the consideration that the parties both in France and in Germany which are most chauvinistic are precisely those which depend for financial support on the industrial magnates, who are now coming to an international understanding. By inertia political animosities will continue, but devoid of serious support they must gradually become weaker, not stronger.

The following picturesque incident may be mentioned to show how 'comfortable' the French are beginning to feel in the company of the Germans on the question of the Ottoman Debts. The French, being by far the largest

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bondholders, took the lead in proposing the formation of a new committee of creditors to coöperate with the old Council of the Debt. Taking the nations in the exact sequence of the relative importance of their holdings of Turkish bonds, they originally proposed that the committee should consist of three Frenchmen, two Germans, and one Belgian. A few years ago such forgetfulness of the existence of the British Ally (this omission has now been corrected) would have been impossible.

Naturally the ties which constitute the Anglo-French Entente are so strong that no lasting effect need be apprehended from any *engouement* which Paris may feel for Berlin. Yet it would be a mistake on our part to ignore facts, and especially to stand aside in complacent expectation of the certain return of our friend after a bout of vivacious flirtation. The unity of Europe is a British interest too, and our attitude toward a Franco-German agreement can, therefore, only be favorable. The thing which should be avoided is exaggeration. But in this respect we rely upon the innate common sense of the French nation.

It will surprise people who for some obscure reason are contemptuous of the French to learn that the wooing comes principally from the German side. It is the Germans who are much more anxious than the French to come to terms and to establish what they call an intimate *Arbeitsgemeinschaft*. We have only to compare the respective volumes of literature published on this question in the German and French languages to see that this is so. It is the German who is indulging in a regular course of autosuggestion to convince himself that an agreement with France is the thing he needs most. The French receive these advances with pleasure, but do not seem to have lost their heads yet. Even the perspective of being liberated from the burden of political obligations for the protection of states in Eastern and Central Europe does not seem as yet to have made too great an impression.

Why is it that the Germans are now so anxious to be on the best of terms with France? The answer is: Because France has so many things which the Germans do not possess. First of all she has the Entente with Great Britain, which remains the key to peace in Europe. Then she is so marvelously stable in the financial sense. Also she possesses colossal natural wealth in the form of essential minerals. The state of affairs in respect of the Anglo-French Entente has been explained so often that here we shall only say that Germany discovered long ago that she can have no agreement with Great Britain in which France has not her fair part. The financial stability of France may not be known to the general public, which remembers the period of franc inflation and has missed the wonderful process of stabilization. But leading financiers in Europe know that as a result of barely a year of a sane policy the Banque de France finds itself at the head of a holding in pounds sterling, not to speak of other valuta, which can exhaust the gold reserve of the Bank of England in one day.

As to the natural resources of France, let us point to the riches hidden in the soil of her possessions in North Africa, of which the world at large is yet ignorant. The Germans know that in 1926 the export of phosphates from the African mines alone reached the figure of 4,151,000 tons, valued at more than 300 million francs. The reserves of hematite iron and manganese ore are important, and their exploitation is only just beginning. Lead, zinc, diatomite, and other minerals are to be obtained in considerable quantities. Add

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to this that France possesses what Germany does not — a wonderful frontage on the Atlantic.

Thus we see that into an economic partnership France need not come as a pauper. Her agriculture is flourishing, her industries have developed amazingly in quality as well as in quantity of production, her losses in live force have been made good. With their passion for detail, the Germans have calculated exactly the advantages accruing to them from a French partnership; they have set out painstakingly to make their point of view abundantly clear to their neighbors.

Included in the price which Germany has to pay for French coöperation is the obligation of maintaining better relations with Poland. This will be all the more easy because the party of Junkers with its stronghold in Eastern Prussia is the only one really interested in keeping alive the question of the Polish corridor, which they want to see replaced by a German one. This party at present is far less rich than it was, and is obliged to surrender gradually its old positions in the front rank of politics and of administration to the followers of the industrial magnates. The latter, with their centre nearer to the Rhine, do not have such a personal interest in the corridor as the Prussian Junkers, and will not allow it to stand in the way of practical politics. Things will be made easier, too, by the fact that, hereditary prejudice apart, the interests of the rural population in Eastern Prussia and in Polish Posnania are identical; an agreement for marketing pigs, pork, and potatoes at high prices — this is what they really need, and not the revision of political frontiers; for we must not forget that economics wipes out frontiers.

We are certain that a Franco-German understanding means also a German-Polish one, because France, in spite of temptations and blandishments, cannot drop her ally. This means that the three Great Powers in the northern half of Europe will stand aligned, forming the kernel of the Continental economic bloc. From the point of view of British interests this result is to be desired, because 'peace in Europe' will then be secured. This on the condition, naturally, that we take precautions in good time not to be squeezed out of our share in the advantages of European unity.

The people who have to fear the creation of a Franco-German-Polish economic partnership are the Soviet tsars. Gone will be the chance of blackmailing one country into giving credits under the pretext that otherwise Soviet trade will go elsewhere. An end will be put, also, to the attempts of the Soviet tsars to keep alive what is left of the old Russian industries. This means that it will be impossible to prevent agricultural Russia from taking precedence over an artificially maintained industrial proletariat. This, again, means the end for the Lenin dynasty. They can fight, and do fight, successfully against political facts, but they have found it increasingly difficult, and will find it impossible, to stand up against the relentless pressure of economic realities. When Europe, coming in peace, will be able to offer to the Russian peasant a higher level of living than that conceded to him by the present tsars, he will not stand their régime any longer. For, after all, at the bottom of all politics of the human race is the intense desire to live well, to live better.

TYRRELL TO PARIS[2]

SIR WILLIAM TYRRELL, England's best man, is going to Paris as Ambassador.

[2] By Arnold Rechberg, in *Vossische Zeitung* (Berlin Liberal daily), *February* 29

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Never has the British Empire found itself more sorely pressed than at the present time. The lordship of the seas has always been the keystone of England's policy, but this lordship she has already renounced in principle. As a result of the war and of the Peace Treaty the financial power of the United States far exceeded that of Great Britain, and with this financial power behind them the Americans began to build a navy that would soon have surpassed the British fleet. No English statesman, even had he possessed the abilities of the great Pitt, could have persuaded the Americans to give up their naval and air construction for good and all.

The American steel industry wants the new American fleet. Not for nothing has the chairmanship of the United States Steel Corporation been reserved for Mr. Coolidge in case he is not elected, and in case he is reëlected he believes that the chairmanship will again be assured him after another term of office is completed. The American steel industry wields sufficient influence upon Congress and the American press to be able to put through a complete naval construction programme no matter who the next president of the United States may be. In a race for naval supremacy England will be the first to yield, since she is financially weaker than the United States.

Furthermore, England's statesmen are convinced that their policy against Bolshevism in China has enjoyed no real success.

'Bolshevism,' an influential Englishman told me, 'has a certain amount of poison that bears a direct relation to its financial resources. The Bolshevist rulers will always be able to support themselves, their Cheka, and the Red Army even if the economic condition of the former Tsarist Empire continues to decline, for Russia is a huge agricultural country. The Soviet officials can destroy many hundred thousand more Russians with their Red Terror and still be able to lay their hands on enough money to conduct propaganda abroad. Their strictly limited national Budget always provides enough funds for that extensive propaganda which they believe to be absolutely necessary.

'With two million pounds the Bolshevist leaders inflame whole Asiatic provinces. But what is a mere two million pounds to a state that spends almost nothing on the administration of justice, on schools, and social institutions — in short, on all those things that cost European nations hundreds of thousands of pounds? Yet in spite of this Moscow is not rich enough to infect the whole world with the poison of its propaganda, and its offensive must therefore concentrate on certain districts. Thus Bolshevism went to China, and thanks to Bolshevist intervention the Chinese civil war has ended in catastrophe. Fully a third of China's purchasing power has been destroyed.

'All this involves a steady loss to European industry, and increased unemployment among those British industries that supply the China markets. In China, as in Russia, Bolshevism is incapable of any effective military organization, and when England sent troops to China, Moscow had to draw in its horns. Bolshevism in China, however, cost England more than five million pounds. This money went to sending English troops to China and to supporting Chang Tso-lin, Chiang Kai-shek, and other subsidized Chinese generals, to say nothing of the loss arising from the collapse of British unity in China and the diminished purchasing power of the Chinese themselves.

'Moscow now draws no distinctions between the various generals, or be-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tween the parties to which they belong. All are regarded as *agents provocateurs* who are to be set at each other's throats. They continue the fighting and keep down the country's purchasing power. Moscow can withdraw from China at any time now, for the purchasing power of the country has been decreased one third for an indefinite period. Europe will encounter economic difficulties, and the English unemployment will grow worse. Furthermore, England has lost over five hundred million pounds in expenses and trade, and Bolshevism can now infect India with its "amount of poison," which will cost England another five hundred million pounds. We must, however, admit that since Trotskii's so-called exile Moscow's anti-English activities in Asia have diminished.'

England must have observed the results of the big German and French industrial agreements in potash, iron, and chemical products. The English statesmen clearly realize that the community of interest between the big German and French industries is growing every day and has already become indissoluble. English statesmen also understand that the alliance between the German and French steel industry and the German and French chemical industry amounts to a fusion of the French and German munition industries, and that a political alliance between Germany and France is inevitable.

Finally, English statesmen believe that neither in France nor in Germany can nationalist opposition outweigh the financial interests of the big German and French industries, and that the defeat of this opposition can be counted upon. London understands the importance of the German and French industrial alliances, since the material welfare of millions of French and German citizens depends on these very alliances.

In its careful analysis of all these factors the Foreign Office has apparently come to the conclusion that the only thing for England is the conclusion of a Franco-German alliance. This view is expressed in the latest pronouncement of Poliakov, who serves as the journalistic spokesman of the Foreign Office, and whose writings appear under the pseudonym of 'Augur' in the *Fortnightly Review*.

Sir William Tyrrell's one mission in Paris is to put through this agreement, which will be no easy task. France is well aware how much her international position has been strengthened by the Franco-German industrial agreements, which explains her tendency to extend these industrial agreements with Germany to political accords as well. America, meanwhile, is beginning to recognize what a trump card the Franco-German bloc might be in her game for lordship of the seas. American diplomacy has bent every effort to bringing this Franco-German bloc into being by means of financial agreements between the two great Western European Powers. Reason enough, then, for England to send her best man into the breach.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CHARLES MAURRAS AND THE POPE [1]

BY SHANE LESLIE

ONLY a Frenchman initiated in partisanship can understand the conflict between the *Action Française* and the Roman Pontiff. Narrow decisions and vague generalities will not elucidate a situation in religious politics which sometimes seems fatuous, but more often is fascinating. How shall the English mind comprehend where angels or cardinals may well fear to tread?

The Anglo-Saxon world presents no particular parallel. But imagine a disciplined and rampant Jacobite Party in England attached violently rather than affectionately to the Apostolic See with an organ as well written and fearless as the *Morning Post* demanding a restitution of real monarchy with a Mussolini as a General Monk to wipe out Liberalism, Socialism, and Democracy as festering failures. Imagine also a leader like Maurras who combines the paradox of Chesterton with the historical irony of Gibbon and the influence upon youth that Newman is fabled to have exerted upon Oxford.

Imagine such a party ensconced in Fleet Street and its anxious repudiation by the Pope — on grounds philosophical and pastoral, but also political lest a pious bourgeoisie be deflected from the Church.

Charles Maurras is the ablest thinker and most direct writer in France. For a quarter of a century he has been building up a party more loyal than the King, more Roman than the Pope, and more Gallic than the people of France. He has turned Royalism from a musty heirloom into a fighting force convicting and controverting all down the line. He has done for French Royalism what Newman did for English Catholicism, and roused the same suspicions in Rome. But Newman always bowed to the storm, and Rome loves nothing more than *une belle conversion* than *une belle soumission*. But Maurras, who has defended Catholicism with an ardor, a splendor, and a mocking fury, has never afforded an example of either. He has defended the Church from without, and, as he has never entered the Holy City, his withers remain unwrung by the indexing of his works.

Let us say that in the present controversy how much unfairness is used on both sides to swell the twin torrent which issues in book and pamphlet. Every text of Maurras that can be contorted or twisted is served to the orthodox. Many of his most pagan and paradoxical sentences should be read in their context, but not as solitary sophisms. We know what enthusiasts can wring out of the Bible or out of Shakespeare. It is no use threading Maurras's cantilena of paganism against a catena of Scholasticism. Suffice to say that he has appealed to the Catholic Church in contrast to the primitive or Hebrew Christianity and demanded a unity of pagan and papal absolutists to rid France at least of the flatulent fruits of democracy. As a theorist Rome could have passed him over, but as he has succeeded in captivating Catholic youth to such an extent that Belgian

[1] From the *Outlook* (London Independent weekly), *March* 10

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

students voted him the palm in a competition which left Cardinal Mercier with a derisive six votes, Rome has felt hurt in a very tender spot. The leadership of Catholic youth is jealously held by the bishops. Their lead being purely pious, somewhat divided, and quite unadventurous, the blazing youth of France have followed Maurras — even into the wilderness. There are twenty thousand who hold with him through thick and thin, and there are priests who give them absolution, I am told on very good authority.

One day when Pope and Maurras are dead and the *Action Française* has reëntered the sacred fold, Maurras will be given credit for his old work by the Church. Since Demaistre's *Du Pape* no ultramontane has evoked the papal centralization with such a sure touch. No Frenchman has better defended the religious orders. No bishop, certainly, has uttered such furious words on their behalf. If he has done nothing, Maurras has taught Catholic youth how to write real French — vivid if fantastic apologia in place of scholastic crumbs carried on a rhetorical current. It is impossible to read Maurras and feel the same of French politics or Roman idealism again. His famous *Anthinéa* and *Chemin de paradis* are now on the Index, but the defenders of the Pope have quoted every relevant or interesting passage to such length that it is possible to read Maurras in the pious press without incurring mortal sin. *Le Chemin de paradis* is not known to English readers, who are content to base their knowledge of modern French literature on translations of Maurois, the homosexual inanities of Proust, and *La Madone des sleepings*. *Le Chemin de paradis* is the most beautiful book in modern parable. Imagine Plato, Oscar Wilde, and Renan combining at their best in one volume, but realize equally why the Pope could not have done otherwise than condemn it when laid before him for a pontifical Yes or No. Where many an exact theologian may slip and many a pious pen has failed, there was little chance of Maurras's obtaining a Roman approval. But like many books, it had been long tacitly passed over owing to the great negative good the author was performing in the lists against the enemies of the Church. After all, *Paradise Lost* and Gibbon's *Rome* have been condemned by Rome, but both works have been cited by converts as reasons for their conversion. Maurras caused converts by the score, and his atheist or agnostic friends often trembled to find themselves on the point of being somersaulted into the Roman camp. To them and to the French bishops the Pope's condemnation brought infinite relief, but of course it has not stayed the conflict, which complicates daily.

The situation must be studied at Rome and Paris. At Rome there is pessimism. The Pope has shot his bolt, and the French faithful who assure him of the slow demoralization and quick collapse of the *Action Française* are summed by the Romans as flatterers. The Pope has made his condemnation his supreme policy, although he may have to carry the struggle to the end of his pontificate and hand the tangled reins to the next Charioteer of God. Cardinal Billot, whether he acted as a Jesuit or as a Frenchman, emphasized the seriousness of those who, accepting the Pope's action as perfectly and sublimely correct, still do not believe the time was opportune. The French cardinal gave a submission which approached annihilation. Only two cardinals have renounced the red hat in a thousand years. Both sides appreciated his *beau geste*. The Pope's secret feelings remain unrecorded.

It seems obvious that Peter is eternal and that Maurras is the temporal spear-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

head as Daudet is the fantastic panache of a party. To those who apply the proverb, *Celui qui mange du Pape en meurt*, it may be answered that Maurras declines to bite the Pope, but rather vaunts having eaten heretics, Jews, and anticlericals alive. If anti-Semitism is a touchstone of Catholicism, there can be no better Catholic. This is difficult to understand in England, where churches, charities, and sports receive a benevolent patronage from Hebrews, who become increasingly more English than the English. But French nationalism makes Jew or German its anvil. The Pope has taken action on a matter in which the spiritual, the political, and the nationalist are intertwined. He has condemned a political modernism, but this is far different from the theological modernism which Pius X scotched, killed, and skinned. It is one thing to crush a movement among priests in the spiritual sphere; it is another thing to check a political paper run by agnostic laymen who offer the Church their patronage but not their allegiance. The *Action Française* has taken such a tremendous fillip that it is thought in Rome that the Pope would make a good business if he recognized it at the cost of the heads of Maurras and Daudet. It would be one way out of the utter deadlock, for it may be truly said of the present situation — *Roma locuta est. Causa infinita est.* The Pope quite rightly, after making his decision, has made himself morally deaf. Books and pamphlets are returned unread. Maurras himself is physically deaf. So the deadlock is complete, and the Duke of Guise, who is the only possible resolvent of the difficulty, would have no easy task in approaching the Pope, as he has leaned toward the *Action Française*.

Time is claimed equally to be on the side of either, but the more time increases the more both contesting parties have to say. Read *Pourquoi Rome a parlé*, by a cohort of Roman Prætorians, and *Charles Maurras et le Nationalisme*, by De Roux, a Maurrasian free lance.

Realize that fate has slowly drawn mighty protagonists into this ecclesiastical Battle of Jutland, where Rome may be likened to the British Navy and the *Action Française* to the brilliant, daring, and lucky Germanic squadron. The day of charity and courtesy has passed, but it should be remembered that Maurras sacrificed a fine page of the *Anthinéa* 'to the beautiful soul of Pius X,' and that he eliminated such Swinburnian sentences as, 'It seemed to me that under the cross of this suffering God night spread over the modern world,' while his friends quote his reply to de Gourmont refuting the idea that 'Christ in glory saddened the world.' Maurras is criticized for describing Christ as 'the sovereign Jupiter crucified for us on earth,' but Dante, the supreme poet of Catholicism, once wrote: *O Sommo Giove che fosti in terra per noi crucifisso.* But what the Ghibelline Dante could be permitted is not for a Guelfic Maurras to write. It is the mixture of pagan and Catholic mythologies which has brought most trouble on Maurras, regardless of the Renaissance Church, which frankly abstracted the qualities and titles of the old deities to decorate Christianity. Would Cardinal Bembo's epitaph pass the Roman censor to-day? While exalting the Roman conceptions of politics, law, and absolutism, Maurras has poured vials of vitriol upon the Oriental chaos. This apparently began with Mithra and Adonis, all the corrupting Asiatic influences which continue in modern Judaism, according to the French nationalists, all the Alexandrianism which settled like a filthy patina on Attic Greece, and, incidentally, all that displeases or disgusts to-day in the Old

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Testament. Maurras lauds the Church for having dealt summarily with Biblical Orientalism. He claims that Rome wisely crushed Asiaticism out of the Old, and democracy out of the New Testament. This may or may not be true, but Rome does not savor his way of discussing 'turbulent Oriental writings.'

Back of all the frenzy and fury over words and sentences is Rome's pious jealousy to see Catholics led by agnostics into positivist philosophy and reactionary politics. Comte once vainly desired an alliance with the Jesuits, and Maurras has offered his pen to the Syllabus. If they cannot agree on what is Truth they can agree on what is practical. The great enemy of all positivists, Jesuits, and absolutists is 'the spirit of mystic anarchy.' The day has come when skeptics join Catholics in detestation of Rousseau and Zola. Democracy to them is damned, and the coup d'état in France is essential, but Rome never recognizes the coup d'état until it becomes a settled régime. Mussolini is accepted in spite of his drastic policy. Maurras is condemned. Nor is the Church illogical, for her first duty is abhorrence of blood. Mussolini is saving Italy from chaos and internal strife. Maurras threatens to precipitate France into civil riots. The Church in France cannot afford to spend her thunder on a lost cause. Besides, the bourgeoisie have rallied to the Church in return for her acceptance of the Republic, and the bishops are bourgeois. The bishops are quite content to go ahead with the honors of the Great War on their shoulders and crowds in their churches, even without a king or the religious orders, for both of which Maurras trumpets. To the careful episcopal mind one is as much an ecclesiastical as the other is a patriotic luxury. However, the bishops are not to escape some form of struggle, and the Pope has hurled them against the *Action Française* like an Imperial Guard. A host of light armed slingers precede them, to be caught on the bayonets of the *Action Française*. Occasionally a thrust goes home, like the clever similes between the writings of Maurras to the Oriental characters, which yield a different sense to Japanese or Chinese eyes, or to a water-marked paper which yields a pagan sense under the orthodox print.

Maurras writes like the last of the Roman philosophers, scornful of the Revolution, the Tolstoian frenzy, and the desire to lift all human life to a level of paroxysm. He protests against a conception of Christ as 'romantic and Saint-Simonian.' He demands the lawgiver, the stabilizer, the pontiff, not the prophet. He should have served Sixtus V or Alexander VI. The modern Papacy has given hostages to modern democracy. The papal policy is to reunite, not skeptics and agnostics, but other Christian churches — Russian, American, and Nonconformist effusions of the religious chaos. But Maurras has annihilated the Protestant prestige in France. Nothing is clearer or more recognized. But since Leo XIII Rome has yearned toward the Biblical and Evangelical churches. Russian Orthodox have been offered terms that the High Anglican would rejoice to accept, and the immense power of the American Catholics insists that the Church must be kept safe for democracy. Maurras has cried aloud for the Holy Roman Empire, and it is not the scoffer but the orthodox who answer him sadly — was it holy, was it an empire, was it Roman even? Maurras is Roman as a French patriot, as an imperialist, as a positivist, as an historian. To him Julius Cæsar and Julius II were equally divine. But he is no Christian, and he cannot therefore be Roman as a Catholic. To clear his

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ground he has separated morals from politics and politics from religion. Rome would not be Rome if she did not claim complete ascendancy over two and surveillance over the third. It is over the third — the political — that the protagonists have met and brought about the deadlock. There is no sadder sight to those who desire progress from chaos than the sight of this paladin falling on the sword with which he defended the holy places; than, perhaps, that of the once optimistic Pontiff, whose arms have opened to a war-sick world to find them entangled like the Laocoön of the Vatican in the trammels of that serpent which we will call 'man's unconquerable mind.'

WIDE-OPEN SINGAPORE[1]

BY DR. WOLFGANG VON WEISL

SINGAPORE is the new immigration centre of the Far East, the America of to-day. It is the golden door to the land of peace and freedom, where gold lies on the streets ready to be picked up by anyone who wishes it, and where no Chinese revolutionaries dare harm our noble burgesses. For years an enormous flood of Chinese has flowed into Singapore and into the Malay States, where a yellow colony has been gradually built up under the British flag among the handsome, brown-skinned, easy-going Malayans.

British Malaya embraces the English Crown Colony of the Straits Settlements, together with Singapore, the English protectorate of the Federated Malay States, and the unfederated Malay States. It contains 130,000 square kilometres of land, and in 1921 its 3,400,000 inhabitants included 1,200,000 Chinese, and since that time immigration has increased the Chinese percentage still further. In the year 1926 no less than 358,000 Chinese entered Singapore, and during the same period only 120,000 left it. This makes an excess immigration of 240,000 Chinese a year, or 20,000 a month.

But the Chinese are not the only ones who migrate to the Malay States. An ever-growing stream of another people is pouring into Penang, the second largest British port in the Malay Peninsula. They are Indians seeking their fortunes in a land that contains everything to make men happy — gold, and tin, and coal, and rubber, and rice, and pineapples, and coconut palms, and wood, and bananas, and coffee, and tapioca.

In 1921, 48,000 Indians entered the country. Four years later, in 1925, the number of Indian immigrants had increased to 91,000, and only 43,000 left the country in that year. In 1926, almost 175,000 immigrants came from the South of India, nearly 150,000 of them with the assistance of the Malay Government and under the control of the Indian Immigration Bureau. In the same year 66,000 Indian immigrants departed. At the end of 1927 British Malaya contained at least 550,000 Indians.

Statistics are only available for the

[1] From *Vossische Zeitung* (Berlin Liberal daily), *February* 12 and 23

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Southern Indian immigrants. But the English have also discerned an 'invisible' immigration from Sumatra. People sail across the Strait of Malacca, landing in the Malay jungle, but this comparatively small inflow of Mohammedans is shrinking as rapidly as the Indian and Chinese flood of immigrants is increasing.

The little peninsula that extends from Siam to the equator and separates the China Sea from the Bay of Bengal has become the boundary between China and India. In Singapore the world of 400 million Chinese meets the world of 320 million Indians. Great Britain's new naval base is situated on the spot where the British Empire stops being brown and begins to turn yellow.

No one could say that the English are displeased by this development, although they are taking pains to prevent the Chinese from growing too rapidly at the expense of the Malayan population. Just as the Britisher acts the part of arbiter between the Jews and Arabs in Palestine, so in Singapore he metes out justice to the different nations. He favors the Malayan and gives him the more important government positions, most of the police being Mohammedan Malayans, or, better still, members of the Indian élite — the dependable Sikhs. But whereas the Jews are not granted free entry in Palestine, the doors of Singapore are open to an uncontrolled flood of Chinese immigration.

Europeans must have a passport and visé to land in Singapore, and those who are not citizens of Great Britain must also notify the police. But the bona fide yellow immigrant is not even asked his name, his birthplace, or his political or religious beliefs when he lands on Malayan soil. For Singapore is free. It is free to all business, a free port, and in this way it has wrested supremacy in the archipelago away from the Dutch.

Being free to all immigrants, it increased from 260,000 inhabitants in the year 1911 to 350,000 in 1921. Five years later it contained about 411,000 immigrants, and the people of the whole peninsula to-day number about 650,000 or 700,000 — an unparalleled growth even for the Far East. And this tendency continues. In the first half of 1926, 133,000 more Chinese entered Singapore than left it, and the Governor-General has loudly declared that in the first half of 1927, 162,000 more Chinese entered the country than departed. This means that the Chinese immigration into British Malaya is bigger than the total immigration into the United States of America. Singapore has taken the place of New York.

The yellow flood pouring into Singapore has disturbed many London politicians. Recent speeches in the House of Commons, attacking the Bolshevist agitators who direct the Java Communists from Singapore, testify to this fact, and the legislation that Sir Hugh Clifford, Governor-General of the Straits Settlements, laid before the Legislative Council on the tenth of October, 1927, empowers the Governor to decrease or forbid immigration in case of necessity. But the fact that such a measure should only now be laid before the British Parliament — a measure that would have been the most natural thing in the world elsewhere — shows the British attitude toward the Chinese immigrants. And any Europeans who still believe that England is quivering with fear in the face of the Yellow Peril are asked to look at these two quotations from the speech of the Governor-General — who, by the way, ranks all other English governors of his class: —

'The potentialities of the Straits Settlements and of Malaya were from the beginning largely built up by the skill, enterprise, and ability of Chinese immigrants from Southern China, who

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

persevered in spite of many hardships (which fact also the Governor recognized). To protect the Chinese born in the Straits, His Majesty's Governor undertook the task of assuring law and order in the Malay States. From that time on Chinese immigrants poured into Malaya in ever-growing numbers, and played a tremendous part in its rapid development. . . .

'Political events in China have to some extent altered the character of the immigrants, who now include not only honest workers, whom we always welcome, but criminals as well. Singapore has become a filter for the Malay States, and it catches all the elements that are not wanted.'

Although this law was passed as a result of the Chinese disturbances early last year, it has been disregarded for all practical purposes, and more buildings are being erected in Singapore to take care of the new immigrants.

'In three years Singapore will have a million inhabitants, and in ten more years two million. Singapore will surpass Canton and Shanghai, and become under the British flag the leading Chinese port.' So a European local patriot of Singapore assured me. In any case, this gives a clue to British policy in China, and perhaps a rather good one.

The Lord knows that the British do not worry much about their yellow subjects. In the city of Singapore, which is eighty or ninety per cent Chinese, sympathy with the Kuomintang was so strong that even to-day the English tramway is at least theoretically boycotted by the Chinese. A Chinese police spy was killed in broad daylight before the very eyes of one of the Chinese protectors, yet only a single battalion of white English troops live and have their being in this big city.

During the war the English discovered the undependability of colored troops in Singapore. Incited by their priests, the Mohammedan soldiers took up arms in behalf of the Sultan of Stamboul. They overran the city, freed German prisoners, and killed Europeans in the streets. Perhaps it is because of the unsatisfactory outcome of this uprising (for the rebels forgot to occupy the fort), perhaps it is because of the fact that many other Europeans agree with the English, that the Chinese are absolutely harmless. In any case, Communist bandits, and anyone who wants to, can come to Singapore to-day, entrance free.

I am much too firm a supporter of the principle of free immigration to be able to object to this state of affairs, especially after I have seen it produce such satisfactory results on natives and immigrants alike. But the fact that immigrants from China are admitted without a passport, without even being asked their names, seems to me astonishing, especially after my experience with the British immigration control in Palestine.

When I asked about this, someone told me: 'In the first place, passports are useless. If they were required, every Chinaman would have, not one, but three, with a different name on each. So what's the use? In the second place, we believe in freedom of thought in Singapore. Every man is equal here, no matter what he thinks, no matter what political programme he represents. In the third place, we are liberal, and tolerate all opinions provided nobody breaks the laws. In the fourth place, we simply prefer this way of doing things, and we put the heads of all rebels in a public place the minute we catch them — and, depend upon it, we catch them quickly!'

I do not believe that any sympathizer with the cause of Chinese independence would deny that this silent demonstration of England in Singapore proved

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

much more effective in the long run than all the anti-English agitations in Canton and Shanghai. It may be remarked in passing that the recent uprisings in China have been largely financed by the Chinese in Singapore, just as the same Chinese were the ones who started the revolt against the Chinese Empire in 1911.

Britain opens the door of her new naval base with a regal gesture, saying: 'Any of you Chinese who are troubled and heavy-laden with your taxes and levies, your generals and politicians, come to my arms and live in peace. *Pax Britannica vobiscum.*' And the Chinese come. In November 1927, 21,240 of them came. The figures are in to-day's paper.

The richest of the many rich Chinese in Singapore is Mr. Tan Ka-kee, the rubber king. His concern buys native rubber from the inhabitants of Sumatra, and his planters in the Malay States supply the rest of his needs. His factories, which turn out fifteen thousand slippers, and so-and-so many shoes and hats a day, employ ten thousand workers.

Mr. Tan Ka-kee came to Singapore thirty years ago as a poor, penniless immigrant. He has made money like an American millionaire, and he spends it like an American. He leads a simple, solitary life. His offices are shabby, but he has spent four million dollars establishing the Nationalist University of Amoy, where the Chinese are educated according to real Chinese principles. He also gives five hundred thousand dollars a year to the head of the University, Dr. Lim Boon-keng, an extreme Nationalist leader.

This is merely one of the many links between the Chinese in British Malaya and those in China itself. A Peking diplomat expressed the matter in this way: 'Peace will not return to China until the Straits Chinese desire it.' And in the meantime the Straits Chinese do not desire it. They play one party off against the other, having begun by supporting Sun Yat-sen's revolution against the Empire. They are now helping the Kuomintang, and apparently other parties as well, though no one knows for sure. They are playing with stacked cards. But their puppets, moved by invisible wires, do not realize this. They believe that they are acting independently. Lim Boon-keng, himself a Straits Chinese, has made many speeches in the past year urging the unification of the brown and yellow races. He also teaches this message in his university, which is supported by money that Tan Ka-kee has made in an English colony.

Lim Boon-keng's teachings fall into two divisions. China is deeply in India's debt, for from India she learned the lesson of Buddhism, the highest spiritual message ever given to humanity. Through Buddhism, also, India gave Christianity and culture to Europe. This cultural connection between China and India should lead to active association between the yellow and brown races. To this end the Indians must organize societies just as the yellow race has done. These secret societies must then organize further cells to work in behalf of their race. The cells will then appoint a common executive committee representing both the yellow and the brown races, with headquarters in Singapore, the natural capital of the yellow and brown world.

The first attempt at coöperation was carried out this year when Tan Ka-kee, Lim Boon-keng, and Rabindranath Tagore met in Singapore — to the great disgust of the Chinese, who have no use for the Indian poet. Nevertheless, the hopes of the South Chinese leader, whose honest idealism even the English admit, are not broken. At a breakfast given in his honor by Euro-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

pean consuls, Lim made this impolite reply to a toast of 'A united China and a united Europe!': 'Just let China unite, and Europe will have to unite or perish.'

The English are opposing the speeches of Tagore and Lim Boon-keng with European technique. These speeches they take much less seriously than they do Mr. Tan Ka-kee's money, which really irritates them. In short, they are building their great naval base between the island of Singapore and the southern end of Johore. The base is protected to the north by the jungle of Eastern Malaya, and to the east by the shallow waters; and a big aviation station is being prepared to meet any aerial attacks.

But the naval base is no fortress, and is not valued as such. Around the property given to the British Government by Singapore and the Sultan of Johore for its base stretch Japanese and Chinese plantations. Even the labor used to build their base is almost exclusively yellow, and the English are terribly proud of the measures they have taken to protect the workers from disease.

But if Singapore is not going to be any Gibraltar, it will at least be another Malta. Bomb-proof underground petroleum tanks, barracks, wharves, docks, flying fields, and submarine stations are being built. Big wireless stations have already been erected. A huge reservoir is under construction, as well as broad streets and a new railway. What all this will cost no one knows.

The Federated Malay States have made the English Government a gift of two million pounds for the naval base. This they can easily afford to do, since they have a surplus of almost twelve million pounds in their Budget. Nevertheless, the military expenses of the naval base will alone cost more than four times this amount, and it is impossible to say how much more will be frittered away on a thousand and one indirect expenses.

In order that the future garrison of Singapore may live in healthy conditions, a brand-new city is being built in the uplands in the Malay Peninsula, and the automobile roads leading to it are costing one and one-quarter million dollars. On Cameron's Highland, in a climate where the temperature never rises above 28° Centigrade and never falls below 15° Centigrade, the troops of the naval base can rest up from the hardships of Singapore; while in Singapore itself quarters are already being provided for some of them.

A conflict between London and the colony has resulted, and it throws so much light on the free dealings between the motherland and the crown colony that it is worth describing in detail.

The Singapore Budget is passed upon by a Legislative Council, whose most important officials include a number of white and colored 'unofficial members,' representing various groups, although actually appointed by the Governor. This lawgiving assembly has now refused to accept the budget for the Singapore garrison that London has recommended. Although the colony is one of the richest countries in the world, although the Straits revenue officials do not know what to do with their surplus money, although an opium revenue replacement reserve fund of twenty million dollars has already been assigned to them, the Assembly still refuses.

The Government has been carefully informed that this money has nothing to do with the customary defense contribution for Singapore. Since it will be used to build barracks and roads which do not concern Singapore but only the naval base, the Singapore millionaires refuse to pay — at any rate, unless London performs some service in re-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

turn. The most conservative and official journal in Singapore, the *Straits Times*, said on the second of November, 1927: 'Gibraltar pays nothing; Malta pays nothing. Why, then, may we ask, is it right or proper to ask Singapore to pay the cost of the naval base?'

And the rather radical *Free Press* wrote: 'Since 1899 twenty per cent of our income has gone to meet the expense of defending Singapore. In 1914, however, this twenty per cent amounted to only $2,622,703, and to-day it amounts to $10,243,437, which is quite another story.'

All this only goes to show how proudly the Singapore aristocrats treat the Government. 'We shall pay what we please,' they say. 'We shall give presents, but let no one tell us how much we shall give. If anyone wants our money, let him come to us.' That is their tone as reflected in their newspapers and in the speeches of the Council. Singapore is feeling its oats. But there is nothing anti-imperialistic about it. Quite the contrary. When the MacDonald Government stopped work on the naval base, these same Singapore papers were the first to cry out in alarm: 'If England cannot and will not protect us any more, we shall be compelled to look elsewhere for support' — an announcement that was accompanied by a sidelong glance at the Australian Commonwealth. They want an empire, all right, in Singapore; and they want a naval base; only they will not pay without knowing what they are paying for.

Having observed the obstinate struggles between the Straits millionaires and the local government, in which white and yellow races and the white and Asiatic rubber planters fight shoulder to shoulder, I have often thought that most of the intrigues in China are merely the results of the local ambitions of the Straits Chinese, with their hundreds of millions of dollars. These people seem to say: 'England, England, be sensible! Sit down and do business with us Singapore millionaires. Asia is big enough for both of us, and we can understand one another if you wish it, for we both know something about business.'

But England can afford to let time take its course, just as much as the Chinese can. China is topsy-turvy; Canton is plundered; the rich Chinese in Shanghai hide from their fellow countrymen in the European quarters. As the Chinese protector of Singapore said to me: 'The Chinese who immigrate here are the gentlest people and the easiest to govern of whom I can conceive.'

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

A PILGRIMAGE TO ATHOS[1]

BY RAYMOND LACOSTE

HAVING visited Delphi and piously borne my barbarous homage to the luminous cult of ancient Greece, it seemed only just for me to prostrate myself before the iconostases of the great mystic monasteries of Mount Athos, where ten centuries of Byzantine religious fervor still refuse to expire.

The journey from Athens to Saloniki contains much to enchant any traveler who is at all interested in legend and history. Having passed Larissa at dawn, we awaken not far from the famous Pharsalian Plain, which extends on our right. It was here that the legions of Cæsar and Mark Antony defeated Pompey's horsemen. The tranquil River Peneus flows between the enormous limestone buttresses of Ossa and Olympus, and now we see the fresh Vale of Tempe, *frigida Tempe*, where the cult of the Pythian Apollo was born. It looks exactly as I pictured it when I was in school. The glassy stream is overflowing its banks and swirling about the enormous trunks of the giant plane trees, which are overgrown with ivy and clematis. But no nymphs are sporting in these clear silences, where leaves of myrtle and laurel tremble. Only the first rays of the sun play upon the scene, and white-skirted shepherds greet us with noble gestures.

We are now near the *Kastro tis Oraias*, the *Chateau de la Belle Franque*, still famous in popular ballads. Buchon, and Barrès after him, admired the brilliant adventure undertaken by these Frenchmen from Champagne, Burgundy, and the Provence, who eight centuries ago divided among themselves the kingdoms and satrapies that used to flourish here; and even today the pick of the Greek peasant occasionally encounters an angular piece of stone bearing the cross of Champagne or the lilies of France.

We have hardly time to recall all this before the immense Gulf of Saloniki spreads out before us, with the city glistening in the distance, with its minarets and its muezzins. It is silent now behind its high white walls.

One hundred and fifty thousand Jews have flourished here and have built up an enormous business and commercial centre — the great bazaar known as the Marchés d'Orient — at the very doors of Asia. The Turks have slowly departed, and in the old quarters that were destroyed by the fire of 1917 cement buildings are replacing the ancient houses of painted wood. Nevertheless, a few old-fashioned streets still remain. Heavy, nail-studded doors stand half open, allowing the passer-by to look in at courtyards planted with cypress trees where fountains are playing on many-colored mosaics.

The cry of the *boza* sellers, who push their fresh drinks about in copper containers, the shouts of the *yaourt* vendors and of the *kebab* roasters, and the shrieks of the tattered beggars, vibrate under the implacable sun. There is more than one turban, more than one tarboosh, in this lively crowd of Orien-

[1] From *L'Écho de Paris* (Clerical daily), *February* 22, 24, 26, 27, 28

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tals, with their nervous hands and long noses. One sees nothing but beards, and the majestic stomachs of Greek *papas* wearing lovely violet belts, and the high mitres of Armenian priests clothed in short blue cassocks. This is the city where the Young Turk movement originated, where Abdul-Hamid, the Red Sultan, languished for years in the Kum-Kalé, the 'tower of blood.' It is the native city of Kemal Pasha, but it is lost to Islam forever.

I imagine that the Turks abandoned this town with the same tears that the Abencerrages of King Boabdil abandoned Granada. The *deunmehs*, a group of Jews half won over to Moslem practices, have also departed. They practised strange services, and for three centuries had been moving about through the ghettos of the Levant prophesying in the name of the Cabala.

Confused by the throngs of Greek monks and of peasants clad in heavy fustian rags, I stand on the bridge of my vessel, surrounded by malodorous goats, and look at the great city stretched out before me. The sea breeze on the white terrace that also serves as their charnel house is caressing the last slumbers of ten thousand French soldiers. A storm is breaking on the seven white towers of the Heptapyrgion, where Sultan Mahmud had the soldiers of his guard decapitated, and I think of all the French adventurers who, by chance or by compulsion, assumed the turban. As the boat docks at the pier I can see far in the distance the peak of Mount Athos, half obscured by the gathering storm. Opposite it towers the proud Olympus. They are holy mountains, virtually twins. One of them shelters the cult of the Living God, and the other only harbors the forgotten mysteries of the great gods that are dead.

The next morning we find ourselves lying-to, lashed by the storm, opposite the point of Kara-Burun and looking over the Vardar marshes. Finally, after groaning and creaking among the waves for twenty-eight hours, our boat anchors in the little bay of Daphne that snuggles into the side of the mountain.

The yellow moon shines down between two tattered clouds. From the warm, rain-soaked land come the silver ringing of bells and whiffs of incense and fresh growing things. Soldiers and police climb on board to identify passengers, for the rules are strict. In ten centuries 'no beardless face of child, woman, or eunuch' has been admitted to these precincts sacred to prayer.

We land. Big bearded devils, their hair twisted into a knot behind and tied with a dirty ribbon, their faces concealed with bluish beards, leap into the little boat, glaring at us fiercely and suspiciously. They wear torn smocks that flap about their battered bodies, exhausted by laceration and fasting. We spend the night in an infamous lodging in the company of fishermen and monks. Seated cross-legged, they drink green tea or Turkish coffee, pulling gently on their pipes, and forever murmuring their eternal litany, *Kyrie Eleison*.

Here I am, then, on the soil of this strange misogynistic republic, the last theocracy of the Occident, perhaps only comparable to the monastic governments of Tibet. It is a land devoted to prayer and death. No laughter of women or children is heard here, for Theodore, the Byzantine monk, said: 'The monk is like salt — issuing from water, salt vanishes at its touch; issuing from woman, the monk loses himself on coming in contact with her.'

Awakened at dawn by the roar of the sea, I acquire a mule and set forth for Karyaes, the seat of the monks and the residence of the Holy Synod. It is there

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that the Epistasia of the Executive Council before whom I am to appear will deliver to me, after my examination, the *Diachirion*, a sealed order bearing a quadruple seal that depicts the Mother of God. This order opens to me the doors of twenty convents and forty *skytes*, or even, if I wish it, the humble cells of the most solitary hermits. I shall have to ask for nothing. At sight of the document the person in charge of each convent will shelter me, offer me board, wine, salt, and vegetables for three days, and at my departure will provide mules to take me to the nearest monastery.

We depart and cross the most beautiful countryside in the world — a combination of Sicily, Tuscany, and Corsica. The sharp, rocky roadbed weaves up the mountain, whose peak, almost six thousand feet above the sea, juts through a brilliant mass of purple. In the distance lie the rosy islands of Thasos, Lemnos, and Samothrace. Streams and cascades sing their way down deep ravines. We hear only the cries of birds, the tinkling of mule bells, and the noise of gongs in mountain-hidden monasteries calling the monks to prayer.

The vegetation is half tropical, half mountainous, consisting of cacti, lemon trees, and oak. The Attic olive tree and the Latin cypress grow side by side fraternally. The vine mingles and interlaces its branches with the laurel, while the fig tree, the jasmine, and the myrtle all flourish here.

Ancient land of miracles and prayers, you have not changed in the course of centuries, not since the time when the rude Catalan sailors pillaged your convents or since the Florentine Buondelmonte crossed you a century ahead of another traveler from our country — Belon, the physician of the Cardinal of Tournon and King Francis I.

Nature is bathed in profound peace. Here and there I pass a hoary monk or anchorite walking by the sea in a torn robe, and leaning on a polished stick like the hero of the *Odyssey*. He surveys me in astonishment, and nobly salutes me with a joyful benediction — '*Ev loghis!*' (God bless you!)

After three hours' climbing, I find myself confronted by the bulbous domes and golden crosses of the Russian skyte of St. Andrew. On the edge of the little town I dismount and walk, for no one except Byzantine emperors has the right to penetrate these holy places on horseback.

One might well imagine one's self in a little lofty village of Auvergne. The dark, narrow streets are paved with large blocks of basalt, and the balconies of painted wood are full of geraniums and clematis. I feel that I am entering some kind of ghetto, and I am reminded of Lithuania or the Carpathians, where six years ago I saw old men with high boots going in and out of their little black stalls. Merchant monks get candles, sugar, and sardines in exchange for rosaries and icons. This is the Rue St. Sulpice of the East, where all the Orthodox Orient gets its supply of holy images.

But the *Magazi* also contain bottles from Germany baptized *Kognak* and *Chartruse*.

I was given a hasty meal of goat's meat and pumpkin with olive oil, washed down with a bitter, resinous wine. I unsuccessfully attempted to purchase an old, dusty icon that was smiling gently over a calendar exalting the virtues of Mariani wine.

The war has brought great changes to Athos. In the old days Slavic influence, upheld by the Tsar, was all-powerful here. Rich convents daily received an increasing number of Russian monks. I was told that many Russian officers used to reside here, and that the Tsar's Government once

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

dreamed of assembling at Athos whole garrisons of military monks, modern Chevaliers of Rhodes. Constantinople was the supreme end of Muscovite aspiration, and Athos not only constituted an admirable centre for spiritual propaganda, but also provided a strategic base of the first importance.

To-day Hellenism has won back the field. The Russian monks, reduced to direst poverty, live humbly on the products of their fishing and the sale of their olives, as they did in the time of the primitive Church. Sunk in misery, they are breaking up their marvelous libraries and collections of treasures, but in returning to the simple life they have gained a great reputation for holiness.

After the Balkan wars a Greek governor at Karyaes replaced the Turkish *kaimalkan*. The new Greek Constitution, however, respects the administrative autonomy of the monks of Athos, and the functions of the amiable Greek official are purely nominal. To tell the truth, I found among the Greek monks a real dislike of the Athens Government, which they characterized as a 'pack of Freemasons.'

There is, however, no doubt that Greece is congratulating itself on the setback that Slavism has suffered at Athos. The Russian monks complain of being persecuted by the Greeks, and they are appealing to the League of Nations against the Greek Government for having confiscated their property. In short, relations are very strained. Perhaps this state of affairs explains the fact that Roman Catholic ideas are received very liberally in the Russian monasteries, while in the others any Catholic visitor is greeted with a rather distrustful courtesy.

The holy peninsula is administered by an ecclesiastical assembly known as the Holy Synod, the *Hiera Kynolis*, composed of twenty monks delegated by each of the sovereign convents. These men live at Karyaes in the *konaks* of their monasteries. They are headed by a *Proedros*, who, in accordance with unchangeable tradition, belongs to the Grand Lavra convent.

The executive organ of the Republic, the *Hiera Epistaisa*, before which I appeared, is composed of four members, one of whom acts as the presiding officer.

Unfortunately, there are only six or seven thousand of these monks left, for since the Russian Revolution it has been hard to get novices. These monks are all followers of the ancient observances of Saint Basil, and fall into two big divisions. The cenobites occupy eleven convents, each of which is directed by an abbot named for life, who alone exercises supreme authority. They are made to undergo a severe fast one hundred and twenty-five days a year, not counting Wednesdays and Fridays. They make the vow of poverty, and are divided into three groups, the Megaloschymites being the ones who take the most severe vows. In their ceremonies they wear a kind of black scapular with heavy embroidery depicting the various sorrows of Golgotha — the cross, the lance, the sponge, the skull, and two crossed legs.

The new idiorrhythmic convents are governed by less authoritative laws. Each monastery is administered democratically by three elected officials, supported by a council composed of ten or fifteen men belonging to a higher rank than the ordinary humble monks. As a matter of fact, the administration of these communities bears a curious resemblance to the administration of the old colleges in Oxford and Cambridge. The monks are also allowed to save money, eat meat, and take their meals privately. Last of all, there are the mendicant monks, who are subject

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to no rules, and resemble the holy men of the thirteenth century.

The monks at the Russian skyte of St. Elias, at whose door I knocked one autumn evening, are the most strict order of cenobites, and I doubt if I shall ever forget the reception these good old men gave me. As soon as I had passed through the door I felt I was in the heart of Holy Russia in olden times. Since I came just after mealtime, the host, whose high boots and greatcoat with a thin copper belt around it made him look more like a Cossack than a monk, served me some *kasha* and steaming borsch. He also gave me a piece of delicious black bread, its crust covered with anise and caraway seeds, as well as enormous wrinkled olives and big golden grapes. And last of all, from a hair-covered leather bottle he poured me, laughing quietly, a glass of violet-flavored wine.

Since they were celebrating a feast in honor of Saint John the Theologue on this particular evening, I was taken to the church, a high, white basilica situated on a terrace overhanging the sea and surrounded by cypress trees. The raging tempest and the whistling wind seemed to symbolize the storms of life that menace man. But here is refuge; beneath this vast nave lies an immense peace. My guide leads us to a high stall. There I am to remain for hours, resting against my miserere, but hardly aware of the fatigue of the long vigil, for I am transported by the marvelous spectacle before me. Where am I? To what century of Byzantine glory have I suddenly been removed? The golden four-storied iconostasis glows gently.

Surrounded by deacons and ancient holy officials, the flat-nosed, bearded pope, with a noble countenance and a magnificent head of hair, celebrates Mass with meticulous solemnity. He is clothed in a cope of delicate azure blue. I look at my neighbors the monks. Low in their dim stalls, these old men, with trembling beards and tragic faces, such as El Greco might paint, say their responses in deep, superhuman voices. The heart-rending lamentation of the interminable choir keeps reverberating beneath the vault: *Gospodi pomiloni*, *Gospodi pomiloni* . . . 'In peace we implore the Lord.'

Here, indeed, is peace — total, complete peace, in which man forgets the vanity of life and humbles himself before the Creator, the *Pantokrator*. This distant church, far from the living world, has realized the Byzantine formula. It really is the terrestrial Heaven, where the terrestrial God dwells. The nocturnal service proceeds, broken by prostrations before holy icons. The novices have to make their genuflections a hundred times a day, the next grade three hundred times a day, and those who have taken the strictest vows twelve hundred times.

Luckily for me, it is not one of the evenings when the prayers continue without interruption for sixteen or seventeen hours. I find myself, however, asking for grace after four hours, while the old men, used to the most wearing ascetic practices, undergo their ordeal valiantly.

But at this moment the indescribable spectacle that makes all this fatigue worth while is beginning. The death-like faces of my companions assume an air of ecstasy as they pray unceasingly. The monks of the highest rank wear high cylindrical caps with floating veils, but this is their only distinguishing mark. For hours ceremonies over a thousand years old, mysterious, magnificent, and full of incomprehensible grandeur, unroll before my eyes. At times the officiating monks, in precious stoles of old rose, gold, shimmering blue, or glaucous green, accompany the celebrant, carrying three offerings of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fruit at arm's length. This is varied by a slow procession lit by flames of gold around the Book containing the Gospels, on which a hoary deacon throws incense, invoking divine wisdom, *Hagia Sophia.*

The officiating priest answers each litany with a secret prayer. Then comes the paraphrase of the words that Our Lord uttered on the cross to the Virgin and to Saint John.

Finally, in the morning, the last part of the liturgy is celebrated. On the *Prothesis*, which symbolizes the manger of the nativity, but which is invisible to infidels, the officiating priest puts bread into the golden paten, symbolizing the Lamb of God in His cradle. On the left he places the chalice of mixed wine and water, representing the blood of the Redeemer. The body forgets its fatigue and the soul is lulled.

The Byzantine Church goes in for various forms of pious amusement. There is, for instance, a hymn in praise of the Mother of God, where twenty-four statues correspond to the different letters of the alphabet. There is a chanted acrostic in nine odes, and an Alleluia written in three voices.

Most marvelous of all is the unforgettable song of the cherubim, the hymn of the angels, fifteen centuries old. It is the glory of the Russian liturgy, and it penetrates the Russian soul to its most secret fibres. This hymn is intoned at the offertory while the celebrants carry the paten, the lance, the chalice, the cross, and the relics. The Host is then pierced with the lance of Golgotha and distributed among the officiating priests, along with little fragments symbolizing the Virgin, the saints, and the apostles. The rest receive a mixture of boiled wheat, dried raisins, odiferous herbs, and incense. This is the end, and we withdraw, kissing the holy icons as we leave. The immense silver lustre made by the flicker of the guttering candles illuminates the sad smile of Christ, the all-powerful, the Pantokrator, who extends his arms in blessing from the top of the central cupola.

He is surrounded by His entire celestial family — the Virgin, the archangels, the thrones and dominations, the saints, and the apostles. The four patron warriors of the East are here — Demetrius, George, and the two Theodores. Dead men are depicted arising from their tombs and pushing their gravestones aside in their haste to obey the summons of the trumpets of the angels of the Lord.

Quite overcome by religious emotion, I betook myself to my cell to sleep. On its wall the effigy of Tsar Alexander III smiled down at me through his moustaches.

For several days I walked the paths of Mount Athos from convent to convent, where I was received with an unvarying ceremonial. At one monastery I was brought before the chief monks, and we sat on a high marble seat, where I was offered coffee, *glyko*, *makarismos*, liqueurs, and rosy wines. We talked together, these bearded old men and I, fairly satisfactorily, conversing about France, Greece, and Russia. Although I am a poor Latin scholar, they courteously kept confronting me with theological problems, accompanying their remarks with a regal wealth of Oriental politeness. Through the windows the violet sea shone in the golden twilight, and nearer at hand cypresses lazily waved their black tops against columns of rose and green marble in paved courts, where wood pigeons flew about heavily.

Let me emphasize the particularly warm reception that these Russian monks extended to me. I wonder how many desolated spirits have sought to forget the Bolshevist terror among this holy company, this veritable Foreign

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Legion of Orthodoxy. I have seen professors, officers, diplomats, and even a grand duke, disguised in monastic costumes.

In very truth, nothing, or almost nothing, has changed in these historic spots where through the centuries so many theological quarrels have taken place and so many miracles and lovely legends have been born. These walls have heard the disputes of the Hesychasts, who tried to attain a kind of Christian Nirvana by means of a curious course of umbilical gymnastics. Alas, all is dead now. The depopulated convents of Athos only live on their magnificent memories. Near us stands the ruins of the glorious Athos Academy that flourished only a century and a half ago, under Meletios and Bulgaros, but it is forgotten now, and I saw its remains.

One day at the convent of the All-Powerful, the Pantokrator, which overlooks an ever-tempestuous sea, one of the monks, not knowing how to be polite to the foreigner whose respectfulness had made itself felt, gathered together on his balcony several blades of sweet basil and offered me the same kind of sweet-scented, sacred bouquet that revealed the site of the True Cross to the Empress Helen. Then, taking me by the hand, he led me to a kind of library, telling me pious stories of certain good servants of God — of Peter of Athos, who was taken prisoner by the Arabs when serving as a soldier in Syria, and who lived fifty years in a cave. Presently we stopped.

The stone shelves before which we stood contained, instead of books, yellow, warped skulls, each labeled with a ticket pasted on its forehead. With a lively finger the good old man turned them over in his wrinkled hands. 'This one here,' he said, 'is our holy father Simon. That one there is Monk Clement.'

It is a custom here to throw the bones of dead monks into a charnel house to rot. Gradually they dry up and disintegrate into a common, anonymous state. But the skulls are preserved separately. In this way one can go and see the remains of one's friends familiarly. For at Athos death holds no fear and no distaste; it is awaited serenely.

Impressive names haunt you everywhere — Constantine, Theodosius, Basil, Leon the Wise, Tsar Lazarus. I was overwhelmed with marvelous histories of kings and princes who came to Athos, where their treasures are still guarded — their psalters, gospels, and doxologies in heavy silver bindings, displayed on tables ornamented with ivory and mother-of-pearl.

At Khilander you are shown the skull of the Prophet Isaiah, at Vatopedi the remains of the True Cross of Nicephorus Gregoras and the girdle of the Virgin Mary. At Aghios-Pavlos five grains of incense and myrrh are kept in a precious receptacle given by a Christian princess who was the wife of the Sultan Murad II, a good fellow and a tolerant one. The libraries contain more than five thousand manuscripts, among them the geography of Ptolemy. Alas, the ignorant monks have thought nothing of tearing out sheets of parchment to cover their jam pots, or of using them as cartridge wads in their muskets when they revolted against the Turks.

I almost stayed at Athos. The equinox had come, and no steamer or sailboat dared to venture on this ever-stormy sea. One day, however, a French bishop, a Turkish Jesuit, and I resolved to cross the Gulf to Langos and Cassandra, the other arms of the peninsula, and thus get back to Europe.

The tempest pursued us — the tempest that is so prettily described as Fortuna in Greek. While hoisting

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their miserable sail, our two sailors, Eustratos and Pericles, implored the heavens and sang to Boreas.

Although our boat almost sank, Pericles, who knew his history well, showed me where Xerxes had built his famous canal. In those days there were cities here consecrated to false gods, and they were called Acrothon, Thyssos, Dion, and Cleonis. One day, however, after the death of Jesus, the Virgin was carried by contrary winds to Athos, while on her way to visit Lazarus at Cyprus. She landed on this very shore. All the idols fell and all the people in Athos were converted. They destroyed the temple of Apollo, the Panagia blessed the mountain, and the idolatrous towns gave place to convents. One day the Emperor issued a bull ordering that Athos, as well as its monks, should be free until the end of the world.

That is the tale that Pericles told me.

FRENCH FORERUNNERS OF COLUMBUS[1]

BY CHARLES DE SAINT-CYR

THE great errors of history are like dead men that should be killed. In fact, they are worse — they are not dead men reborn, but dead men who continue to live. Camille Jullian, for instance, has established the fact that Julius Cæsar and his legions were guilty of ignominious conduct in Gaul, and that the Gauls themselves had reached a high state of civilization. Nevertheless, we still persist in teaching our children to believe that the state of slavery under which our forefathers suffered was a kind of benefit.

In the same way we obstinately pay homage to Christopher Columbus for the discovery of America, and his partisans — who include almost everybody, since it is easier to live on ready-made ideas than to form one's own — have not hesitated to ask the Church to beatify him. The Church, however, does not allow itself to be imposed upon quite so easily.

Who was Columbus? A Genoan, is the usual response. Some people object, however, and say a Corsican. That may be, and the confusion is due to the fact that Genoa exercised a purely nominal power over Corsica at Columbus's time. Other origins have also been traced, and all that we can say is that we are not really certain of anything about him. Will the future give us a satisfactory explanation? Possibly, but it is also possible that this is one of those problems that continually attract the attention of new investigators but are never solved. In any case, it is less important to know Christopher Columbus's origin than to know what the relations were in his time between Europe and the countries on the other side of the Atlantic Ocean — countries that in most people's opinion were part of the Asiatic continent.

Long before Christopher Columbus's time these lands had been discovered and the Scandinavians had established themselves in Greenland. There were

[1] From *Le Correspondant* (Liberal Catholic semimonthly), *February* 10

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bishops in that part of the world who corresponded regularly with their mother country and with Rome. One of the mysteries that haunted the Middle Ages was the disappearance of one of these colonies called Ostrebygd. Many expeditions set out in search of it, and all of them failed until some Venetians, known as Zenos, in the service of the King of England, conceived the idea of going to the western coast of Greenland and not the eastern coast, the part that faced Europe. They had been inspired by a chorography of the former colony in Greenland, and also came into possession of 'nautical instructions to get there from Iceland' that had been drawn up by Ivar Bardsen, the major-domo of the bishop of that colony. The Zenos found the place where the lost colony had existed, and concluded that it had been destroyed by some cataclysm. It would be well to remember that, since the colony had been situated on the west coast of Greenland, it had probably dispatched expeditions to the mainland.

But even if this most logical assumption should by any chance not be true, we have positive means of knowing that the Scandinavians had visited America at the beginning of the eleventh century. They had been guided there by Leif, son of Eric the Red. Sagas have brought to us the details of his expedition, or rather of his expeditions, for there were several of them, some of which were led by his sons. These sagas have also apprised us that love was more than once the pilot.

Without going into details, I shall simply recall the fact that Leif spent his first winter in the region now known as Massachusetts, and that in the course of his voyage he picked up fifteen shipwrecked Normans from a little island. Dr. Regnault, who is intensely interested in these questions, informed the Académie du Var three years ago that one of these shipwrecked people was a very beautiful woman named Thurida, who changed her name to Gudrida after her conversion. She was a widow with a passion for new countries, and she never stopped trying to inflame her compatriots with the desire to return to the New World. She married Leif's third son, Thorstein, whom she dragged off on a new expedition in search of the ashes of his brother, who had been killed during a previous expedition. Their ship was hurled back by a storm on the west coast of Greenland. Returning to Eric's court, Gudrida presently married Thorfinn, whom she led away on still another expedition. This was the longest and most brilliant trip of all. In the district of Berkeley, Norman inscriptions have been found engraved on the rocks, and one of them reads: 'One hundred and thirty-one men of the North occupied this country with Thorfinn.'

Thorfinn discovered several new countries, and named them Helluland (Land of the State), Markland (Land of Wood), and Vineland (Land of Wine). Was Helluland, where Leif first disembarked, Newfoundland, as people have supposed? I shall refrain from taking part in this controversy, and I shall also refrain from discussing whether Markland is Nova Scotia, but on the subject of Vineland we are quite sure of ourselves. The chronicler having specified that the length of the day there was nine hours, we can deduce that its latitude was 41°. Furthermore, English explorers found vines in this region, and therefore gave the name of Martha's Vineyard to the big island situated at latitude 41° 23′. Weapons buried with the bodies of the Normans have recently been excavated there, and the fact of these expeditions is therefore indisputably established.

It is also indisputable that Columbus

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

knew such expeditions had been undertaken. While he was preparing for his own voyage he went to Iceland in search of documents. Most authors, says M. Jean Revel, recognize that Columbus met Magnus, the Bishop of Skalholt, who provided him with all the necessary information. To which the upholders of Columbus — in other words, most people — will reply that this information only concerned North America, and that their hero set out for Central America.

But here again we come upon a still more damaging piece of evidence. Columbus was not the first man to visit the New World, for the Dieppe sailor, Jean Cousin, had landed in 1488 at the mouth of a great river that he called the 'Maragnon,' and that is none other than the Amazon. One of the sailors that Cousin had on board with him was called Pinson. For reasons that we do not know, Cousin dismissed this Pinson, declaring that he was 'unworthy to sail on Norman ships.'

At this point let us observe that Columbus said that the name of the pilot who guided his ship was Pinzoni, and that the ship this Pinzoni sailed was the only one not to use the triangular lateen sail, being equipped instead with the square Norman sail. Columbus's son relates that during the voyage his father kept asking Pinzoni if they were on the right track. This was because Pinzoni had been there before, being none other than our Pinson, and Columbus, knowing this, prudently trusted the man from Dieppe. In conclusion, I might also recall that the French Normans always used the route that Jean Cousin had discovered. Ten years after Columbus's first voyage one of them returned to Brazil with a sailor on board named Cousin. Either this man was a relation of the original discoverer, or it was a coincidence pure and simple.

It is therefore certain that Christopher Columbus did not discover America. Is it, however, equally certain that the discoverer was Leif, the son of Eric the Red, and those Norsemen whose adventurous voyages I have briefly referred to? I think that the answer is No, and here are my reasons.

Everyone knows that when Cortes invaded Mexico the country was under the sway of the warlike Aztec Empire, whose civilization was far from gentle. Among these Aztecs we find undoubted traces of Christian evangelizing. These traces include the confession, and especially the priests' concluding phrase: 'The flesh of the unfortunate ones is thy flesh, and they are men like unto thyself.' The Aztecs also knew the crucifix, and a white marble cross has been found in what is to-day St. John of Ulua in Vera Cruz, and natives explained that on this cross 'a man had died more beautiful and more resplendent than the sun.'

Nor is this all. The Aztecs had treasured the memory of a white man from whom their forefathers had received the good word, which they had vainly tried to retain when the white man, having converted them, returned toward the land whence the sun came — in other words, our side of the Atlantic. This evangelist had predicted that other white men would follow him, and they were still expected. Cortes learned about this from his Indian mistress, Marina. He exploited this belief most ignominiously, pretending that he was the white man they had been waiting for, and in this way he gained access to the heart of the Aztec Empire. This is a fact. And here is another.

The Toltecs, who dominated Mexico before the Aztecs, from the sixth to the twelfth century, were ignorant of the rudiments of Christianity, although their gentleness would have been per-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG.
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fectly appropriate to a religion of piety and goodness.

The question, therefore, is: Were the Aztecs converted before they came to Mexico, and where had they come from? Guided, they said, by an eagle, they left a country far to the North, not being allowed to stop until this eagle should have rested on a nopal rising from the waters. This occurred, and on the spot that the eagle lit they founded their capital. Later, when Mexico proclaimed its independence and wished to identify itself with this distant past, it chose as its emblem an eagle perched on a nopal emerging from the waters.

How long did the migration of the Aztecs last? No one knows. Christian beliefs, or at least the rudiments of Christianity, similar to those found among the Aztecs, have been discovered among the Canadian Indians, and the conversion of both these groups would therefore seem to date from the time when the Aztecs detached themselves from other Indians of the same race as themselves. To be sure, we have no idea of the exact moment when this separation occurred, but it was probably before the year 1000. Perhaps some day we shall find out for certain, but at present very little is known about early North American history.

One point remains — what was the nationality of the discoverer? The usual opinion is that he was a Norman or a Scandinavian. This, however, would contradict the firm conviction of certain American tribes, who believed that the first comers were Frenchmen, since from them they had learned how to hitch dogs to a cart. I beg that people consider the period to which this custom dates back, and likewise its symbolic significance, for it is the same thing as civilization. Anyone who stops to consider this fact will not be able to lay it aside easily. I am one of those who believe that traditions have great strength. Tradition sometimes deforms, it does not create, but we can and we should always remember its principle. It is like a bird that flies wildly through the air but that has always started from firm ground.

Since I am talking about traditions, I should like to recall another that, in spite of the universal homage rendered to Columbus, has always persisted in France particularly, and that tends to establish the fact that the real discoverer of America was a monk. Is n't this confirmed by the rudiments of Christian faith among the Mexicans?

Such, in brief, are the main contentions that I am setting forth in my book, *Sous le signe du caribou*, where I state the French hypothesis that a Frenchman discovered America. We French ought always to proclaim the distinguished acts of our ancestors, but, alas, we have never received the credit that is our due. Our nation has perhaps made more remarkable discoveries than any other, but if our ancestor sailors from Dieppe and Honfleur kept their secrets to make money from them, that should not prevent us from acknowledging what they did. Apparently they were the men who discovered America. Did n't a French Norman demonstrate the scientific excellence of the routes that they empirically followed? In 1387 Nicolas Oresme, Bishop of Lisieux, stated in his *Traité de la sphère* that the earth was round.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

SWEET ADELINE[1]

BY MASSIMO BONTEMPELLI

ADELINE was a splendid girl. She used to come to see me every evening. Finally, however, I grew just a little bored, for she always wanted us to go right out on the terrace, and it irritated me. Adeline was very affectionate, but not so very intelligent.

We would stand on the terrace leaning our elbows on the balustrade and contemplating the night. The house stood on a lofty spot at the edge of the town, just where the plain began. You got a wide view of the heavens, and could see the black landscape merging with the sky on the horizon, while an immense pathway of stars ascended above us.

Adeline never failed to say, 'How beautiful it is!' — which bored me even more than the sky.

Adeline wanted to know the names of the stars, but this was not my strong point. At first I exploited the aggressive splendor of the seven stars in the Great Bear, and then the palpitations of the seven stars in the Little Bear, which twinkle so timidly they always seem on the point of going out. I deplored — for it was the beginning of October — the absence of the aurora borealis. The Lyra was one of our great discoveries, and Vega had to turn its rays on us many times before Adeline's eyes responded, moist with emotion.

Luckily Adeline forgot a great many things from one evening to the next, and I could repeat myself safely. From time to time during the day I would study some new constellations on a map of the heavens, concentrating on those with unusually difficult names.

'Turn around. Do you see that triangle just a little to the left of Andromeda. It is the Honor of Frederick.'

'Really? What does that mean?'

Avoiding a reply, I launched into a better story. 'But that's nothing at all. There is also the Brandenburg Sceptre, the Sobieski Escutcheon, and the Royal Shield of Poniatowski.'

'Merciful heavens!' murmured Adeline, in a voice like a zither — for hers was indeed a lovely voice, well worthy of the zither of Alcæus.

I continued: 'Yes, but you don't see them at this time of the year. Look just a little below Eridanus, Adeline — no, it would be better for you not to keep gazing at that little spot where the Pleiades are glimmering.'

'Glimmering?'

'Yes, the Pleiades. Look up further.'

'Look up where?'

'That way. Like that!'

'More?'

'No, not so much; ten yards, and you will see five stars.' She looked, but it was probably five other stars that she saw. 'There are two on the outside flickering as if they were about to go out; then there's one to the left that glows steadily. It's a little yellower. Then you come to the five stars.'

'I've found them.'

'Good. That's the Harp of George.'

'Who was George?'

'Who was George? A celebrated harp-player.'

[1] From '*900*' (international literary and artistic quarterly), Autumn, 1927

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

'How is that possible? Did they know about harps in those days?'

'In what days?'

The deep sky shone resplendent above Adeline's stupidity and my patience — three different images of the infinite.

I became very devoted to Orion. October was ending, and the night air was full of moisture and frost. 'You see how big it is — it's the loveliest of all.'

'Why did n't you let me see it sooner?'

'Because it was n't here before. You don't see it in summer. In summer you only see it during the day, and then it is n't there.'

'I don't understand that.'

'No matter. See how powerful he is. He holds his arms uplifted above his head, and plants his legs widely on the ground. You see his sword belt around his waist, and a little below it the point of his sword. He is a rather tyrannical fellow, but not bad at bottom. He is looking and waiting for Sirius just now, only Sirius does not come until one o'clock.'

'You are a droll fellow,' said Adeline. 'You speak as if you were talking about somebody.'

'So you think there was no such person?'

She opened her two startled eyes wide, and in the dark they also looked like stars.

I then explained to her that the constellations are nothing more or less than men, women, plants, animals, flowers, and terrestrial things transplanted to the sky and transformed into stars.

'One never knows whether you are joking or talking seriously.'

From that evening on she gave me no rest. She wanted to know what every star had been when it was on earth. Her surprise was great the night I showed her Helice, who was Jupiter's nurse, and she dropped the subject.

'Why don't you believe it?'

'Are there women there, too? Impossible!'

I quickly found a convincing argument. 'There's even a dog there — Sirius. You can see him now just on the edge of the sky.'

Sirius was shining magnificently, and his light drowned out all the stars about him. He looked nothing like a dog; he had a dazzling countenance that regarded us quietly for a moment and then shifted its gaze toward Orion, his lord and master. All that part of the sky was dominated by Orion and Sirius. The other stars modestly held back and scarcely breathed in the presence of such terrifying despots.

'Yes, Sirius was a dog,' I went on; 'and dogs are stronger than women, are n't they? Once there was a lot of room, and it was easy to send people up there. At times they traveled in crowds. Perseus went there with his wife, Andromeda, and even with his father and mother-in-law, Cepheus and Cassiopeia, and in the sky they keep on living together as a family. But to-day it's more difficult to find room.'

Adeline began laughing, and it irritated me. Then she started reflecting, and finally she asked me in her zitherlike voice: 'What breed was he?'

'Who?'

'Sirius.'

'Oh, a hunting dog.'

'I like hunting dogs, but I like Pekingese better.'

How could I get rid of Adeline without killing her!

In this way the idea of men and women being raised into the sky and changed into stars became more and more fixed in her mind. One evening at the end of October, when it was a little less damp and a little colder than it had been the evening before, I called her attention to some star or other which I said was Julius Cæsar, for I could not find any more suitable material in my

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

atlas. To satisfy her increasingly refined and exigent tastes, I reflected that I should have to look into the works of Ovid for some story of a constellation's metamorphosis. But I had no copy of Ovid. None of my acquaintances had a copy of Ovid, and I should have been embarrassed to go into a library and ask for a copy of Ovid.

'That's enough for the present, Adeline. Look how all the stars are gazing at us.'

'I feel it keenly.'

It really did seem to me that all the stars in the heavens had begun looking at us like the audience in a theatre when you arrive late because your wife has taken so long to get dressed.

'I feel it keenly,' continued Adeline, 'and I don't like it.'

She felt that the sky was too full of people, and did not kiss me when she left, which only served to fan my desire.

When she finally went away I did not accompany her, but went out for a minute to enjoy the pleasure of entering my house alone, finding it empty, and going to bed. The stars were shining above me, but more timidly. As for Adeline, what an affectionate girl she was. And man, I reflected, was nothing but a yawning gulf of ingratitude. Night was descending upon the earth through the profound blackness, moving from star to star, impregnating all the air about me. The blackness of the air and the blackness of night enveloped me voluptuously.

Her eyes had become more brilliant than ever from looking at the stars every night, and her body was frail. The last night she arrived in black, and her face was pallid. Her eyes shone more darkly than ever, and more ardently too. She wore a girdle of silver about her waist, and her new aspect quickly plunged me into a state of wildly affectionate admiration.

'What's on your mind this evening, Adeline?'

'Nothing. Let's hurry out and see the stars. They are waiting for me.'

Once on the terrace I perceived that all the celestial world was indeed reaching down toward us. There was not a trace of moonlight. The stars were shining in a soft, far-spreading sky. They no longer seemed to be hung in the vault of the heavens, but appeared to have detached themselves and descended to look at us. Even the most distant of all on the far, far horizon hastened to cast their rays upon us, upon her. The palest of them came to life and the whole sky seemed alive with vast anxiety. I shivered. Pressing myself close to her, I wanted to pass my arm about her silver girdle, but she drew away and remained apart for a long time, looking at the sky that seemed to be calling her. I dared not speak. Already the darkness of her robe was lost in the darkness of the night, at least to my confused eyes, and I only saw her silver girdle palpitating strangely. I could not discern her full face, but pale light seemed to be shooting from her eyes and shining upon the distant heavens. Meanwhile, the sky was growing increasingly disturbed.

I had lost all notion of time. At moments I would notice that the celestial vault so full of fantastic lights was slowly revolving above our heads. Some constellations were setting, others were rising. The Lyra had disappeared, and then the Swan. Suddenly I understood that the hour was growing late, for I recognized, low on the horizon to our left, the green rays of Arcturus. I came back to earth quickly and turned toward Adeline. She turned toward me at the same moment. Her pale face already seemed to be made of star dust. She gave me a look compounded of pure, clear starlight. Then she gazed toward the heavens again.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Unable to speak or move, I could only follow her eyes. The whole sky became confused. All the constellations bowed as if they were about to execute a ballet. She raised her arms. Was it a salutation, an invocation, or did she want to raise herself aloft? I saw the blackness of her body softly trembling as she rose from the ground. Before my eyes she was wafted into the air, and a halo of light surrounded her.

Suddenly the darkness absorbed her black dress and nothing was left of her but a cloud of diffused light. She ascended still higher; and her girdle, too, rose aloft, glistening in a light, pearly mist. As she continued to rise I saw that she was looking back at me and had soon turned completely toward me. Her eyes began to glow, and as she rose higher she never stopped regarding me. Mounting rapidly, she presently reached the roof of heaven itself. Lightly crossing the Milky Way and passing the zenith, she began to descend on the other side. The trembling constellations gave place to her, and she glided gently among the stars without touching them. Descending into the black vault, she headed for a free space of sky near the Great Bear.

Then all the stars in the sky stopped in their places, and I saw the little pale cloud halt and vanish, absorbed by the blackness of the heavens. Nothing remained but five points of light, because her silver girdle had broken up into three little stars, and above it shone two brighter points of light that were Adeline's eyes. And all the firmament now glowed in peace.

THE GOLDEN ARROW[1]

BY GEORGE POPOFF

NOWHERE in Europe, perhaps nowhere in all the world, is there such a fashionable, smart, and distinguished trip as the journey from London to the Riviera and back. And no wonder. When foggy autumn and half a frosty winter have swept over England, everyone in the world of high society or high finance feels irresistibly impelled to hasten south where sunshine and blue skies seem to last forever. A steady stream, a golden stream of exclusiveness, pours south across the Channel, through the lovely plains of France, to the lovely Côte d'Azur. This human stream is golden, because the trip costs many gold ducats and only the extremely rich can afford it. The name of the de luxe train that carries these happy, enviable people from inhospitable England to the friendly South of France has a significant name — 'The Golden Arrow,' *La Flèche d'Or*.

There it stands in the Victoria Station — first-class Pullman cars, a baggage car, and a locomotive; nothing more. All eight cars are painted golden yellow, and a golden arrow ornaments each wagon. Every passenger has a movable club seat to himself, and a private table in front of him laid with a real English breakfast, rich and appe-

[1] From *Pester Lloyd* (Budapest German-Hungarian daily), *February* 22

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

tizing. Lazily and unhurriedly the passengers saunter down the platform. There are old, powdered ladies whose peculiar elegance consists in wearing the most expensive kind of clothes that were fashionable at the turn of the century and that lend them a peculiarly distinguished air. The older men, with their bright-red faces and snow-white moustaches, look like members of the House of Lords. They are clothed in heavy Scotch tweeds, and their indestructible shoes are brilliantly shined. There are young women, too, painted to the eyes, and it is hard to tell whether they are duchesses or famous variety stars. And last but not least, the young sons of Albion, obviously looking forward to the moment when they will reach the longed-for soil of the Continent and be able to sow their wild oats far from all Anglo-Saxon restraints.

It is a gay, elegant company, like a garden party in Buckingham Palace. People bow and greet each other, laughing and reveling in this atmosphere of golden superfluity. Others yawn and seem indignant at having to get up so early. But soon something happens to entertain them. Led by a smooth-shaven groom, a pack of forty or fifty greyhounds suddenly appears. They, too, are loaded on board the Golden Arrow for France. The dogs are all of the same size, all slender, all yellowish-gold in color. They jump about nervously, and their handsome, bejeweled bodies are incredibly graceful. And what a fascinating picture of breeding, laziness, and golden, overflowing beauty it is as the passengers of the Golden Arrow, all these elegant ladies and gentlemen, swarm about them.

Southern England, through which the train now dashes, is a charming country. The grass is soft and green even in winter, and the trees, although leafless, are thick and widespreading; and the little houses to the right and left of the tracks are ancient, snug, and cosy. But eternal gray fog overhangs the whole countryside, and suddenly the rain begins to fall. Turning away with a shiver, the passengers attack their hot breakfasts, served by polite, speedy waiters.

Here is an opportunity for social observation. The service of the Golden Arrow is flawless, resembling in no way the usual restaurant car where each numbered passenger has his food hastily and automatically thrown in front of him. Here everything is done politely, carefully, and individually. How polite these proletarian waiters are. If they were serving bourgeois travelers in second class or the poor people in third, they would be gruff and uncivil, but here they are courtesy personified. Why, then, complain of the inequality of classes if the lower classes themselves help to emphasize matters?

The same manifestation can be discerned throughout the entire journey. Everywhere and by everybody are the rich, distinguished passengers of the Golden Arrow more cordially received than any other passengers. The customs inspectors go through the train only asking one brief, simple question: 'Have you anything to declare?'

'No.'

'Thank you; it's all right.'

To the English passport officials, who treat other travelers so strictly, the passengers on the Golden Arrow hardly seem to exist, and the officials almost expire with humility. The raw, gruff sailors on the Dover-Calais line are turned into well-brought-up, gentle Sunday-school children in the presence of the rich, well-clothed ladies and gentlemen whom the Golden Arrow has emptied into their boat. Even the waves in the Channel seem to abate

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and act in the most mannerly way when the Golden Arrow crowd crosses. It is an amusing sight, well worth observing, and it brings home once more the fact that elementary truths are undeniable — 'Money talks.'

In Calais a second Golden Arrow stands ready. This train, like the one in England, is composed of eight golden-yellow first-class Pullman cars, and the little tables before the chairs are all laid. The only difference is that an opulent French déjeuner will be served here instead of an English breakfast. A waiter from the bar, who speaks every language, flits lightly from car to car taking orders for cocktails and whiskey-and-sodas. The golden-yellow slender greyhounds dance past on the platform. The sea trip has agreed with them and they are all in 'good form.' '*Le Matin! Le Matin!*' shouts a newsboy. The mustachioed French *chef du gare*, with his red Bordeaux nose and his slovenly, ill-fitting uniform, gives the signal, and the Golden Arrow departs southward, seaward, and sunward.

In Paris the travelers face a difficult choice. Those who wish to spend the night in Paris can take the Golden Arrow the next morning for the Mediterranean, but for those who are in a hurry another train stands ready, composed of first-class sleeping cars. These cars are not golden-yellow, but dark blue, and for that reason this is known as the 'Blue Train.' For my part, I feel that the Blue Train is the appropriate train in which to go to the blue sea, and I therefore choose this means of transportation. Before going to sleep I once more peruse the London paper that I have taken with me, and as the regular rattling of the train gradually puts me to sleep one headline sticks in my mind: 'Bad, rainy weather will continue throughout all England.'

I wake an hour before we reach Cannes. A scene of wonder greets my eyes. Spring, sunlight, and blue — heavenly blue, endless and unbroken. How well I understand now the eternal yearning of the inhabitants of the British Isles to go south, to go to that country where good sunny weather always prevails. On account of the speed with which the Golden Arrow and the Blue Train take the traveler from the banks of the Thames to the banks of the Mediterranean, the contrast between the monotonous, wet, gray dampness of the London fog and the eternal blue skies and sunlight in this heavenly country is especially overwhelming. This is indeed an azure coast, and all the superlatives coined by the tourist agencies fail to do justice to its beauty.

The charm of the Côte d'Azur is so great that nothing can spoil it, not even the eternal presence of thousands of demimondaines, old and young, powdered *gigolos*, enthusiastic and professional gamblers, adventurers great and small, and all those weary men, half-crushed by the machine of life, who are here in search of rest and recreation. Far from depressing you, these people almost become bearable. The enchanting background of the sea, the all-pervading warmth of southern sunlight, make them agreeable, and one accepts them unthinkingly as part of this pleasure resort, just like the low, murmuring pines on the seacoast or the many-colored mussels in the golden, endless sands.

'Look, there go the Dolly Sisters, who play for such high stakes! Here comes the Duke of Rutland, and there's the King of Denmark. The fellow sitting there is the famous hairdresser Antoine, and the man at the bar is Duchess So-and-So's gigolo!'

Aimlessly and vaguely they swim through this great aquarium of life.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yet trouble still seems to possess them, making the rest of us believe that their life of pleasure fails to satisfy, although other people might consider it unadulterated joy.

Nevertheless, life can be delightful here. Somewhere between Monte Carlo and Nice stands a hotel close to the sea. It is perhaps the only one on the whole coast that seems to hang directly over the waves. The waiters glide about silently and present the guests with all the culinary wonders that this lavish sea provides. Sweet wine gently befogs one's senses. It is fine to have a charming companion, but even if you have none, no matter. Brother Wine throws his spell over everything. The music plays popular tunes, carelessly, liltingly, cajolingly — tunes that seem adapted to this heaven on earth. Your gaze wanders over the sea, which is blue, utterly blue, azure blue. A sailboat rigged something like a frigate bobs on the far horizon. Innumerable white and silver gulls dip and flit over the ever-moving mirror of water. Slowly, at long, regular intervals, the gentle blue waves of the sea break on the shore, and the noise of their breaking blends with the music. I feel as if the two sounds were meeting, embracing each other, and flowing together at the very spot where I am sitting. For life is lovely, overwhelmingly lovely, here.

THE ORIGINALITY OF M. ANDRÉ MAUROIS[1]

BY AURIANT

M. André Maurois is a clever man, a genius at business. Everything he undertakes succeeds, literature as well as industry. He does several things at once, and by the same methods subdues those two ancient enemies who until his day seemed irreconcilable. With equal good cheer, M. André Maurois manufactures cloth at Elbeuf and books at Paris.

M. André Maurois is a happy author, and therefore boasts no history. He has never undergone the difficulties, deceptions, or discouragements that assail most beginners. He is a post-war *nouveau riche* of literature who has been spared the hard apprenticeship of art.

Before August 4, 1914, M. André Maurois made a false start. Occasional amateur fragments of verse and prose signed by his real name, Émile Herzog, passed unnoticed in various little reviews. His revenge came in 1918, just after he was demobilized, and it was so brilliant, so unhoped-for, that he must have been as much surprised as pleased. At that time M. Maurois had borrowed the airs of M. Giraudoux, who in turn was a kind of second cousin to a certain Gaspard, a popular favorite of two years before.

In the gayety of the Armistice Colonel Bramble was celebrated and his silences obtained a brilliant success. The discourses of Dr. O'Grady were less popular. Political breezes from the

[1] From the *Mercure de France* (Paris Clerical Conservative semimonthly), *March* 1

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

East had slightly chilled the Entente Cordiale. Bramble was tempting King Feisal in Syria, and O'Grady was preaching a crusade on Constantinople among the Greeks of Asia Minor. The British uniform had ceased to please.

Nevertheless, M. Maurois kept the popular reputation that his first two books had won him, and he continued to be regarded as possessing a more intimate knowledge of English affairs and English people than any other French writer. This, however, was far from being true. His knowledge of English affairs was actually confined to what M. André Maurois had seen in British military camps and to what he had remembered from a little reading. To write an English novel would have been far beyond him, but he somehow had to live up to the flattering opinion that people had formed of his talents.

When the notebooks he had brought back from the front were exhausted he found himself at the end of his literary resources. Entering industry at an early age and being engrossed in the factory, he enjoyed scant leisure for dreaming or observation. Literature was merely his Ingres violin, an instrument that he played quite awkwardly merely to break the monotony of provincial evenings. Often he would find himself envying those Bohemians who had lived as their fancy bade them — men like Percy Bysshe Shelley, whose biography by Dr. Dowden he had read.

This admirable book, rare even in England, was totally unknown in France, where few people even in literary circles were conversant with Shelley. By taking certain precautions one could safely adapt it, and the author of *The Silences of Colonel Bramble* yielded to the temptation. Thus the good Dr. Dowden extracted M. Maurois from an embarrassing position and provided him with the subject and the matter for a novelized biography and revealed to him his true vocation.

When M. Maurois was at school his rhetoric professor kept saying to him: 'Condense, compress, wind up with a swift blow.' M. Maurois remembered the advice. He compressed his English version, condensing it and shortening it so much that when he came to his final stroke he had reduced the two octavo volumes of the original work to a little volume of two-hundred-odd pages. It looked well, however, and M. Maurois was proud of it, feeling a sense of personal prowess. He then hit upon a romantic title and put *Ariel, ou La Vie de Shelley* in the hands of his publisher, asking him to sell a lot of copies.

M. Maurois may well have congratulated himself on his success at exploiting public ignorance in general and the ignorance of certain pretentious critics in particular. *Ariel, ou La Vie de Shelley* scored a veritable triumph. It was hailed as a masterpiece. M. Maurois was congratulated upon the happy inspiration that revealed Shelley to France; and even in England he was commended for having combined winged fancy with the most solid kind of erudition and having turned history into a novel.

The sheeplike editors hastened to exploit this new conquest. Everyone wished to traffic in the charms of Cleo, and lines began forming in front of tombs and libraries. Men, women, and girl writers, opportunist Plutarchs devoid of aptitude but burning with mercenary zeal, grew wildly excited about illustrious dead people whom they had regarded with perfect indifference the very evening before.

Imitating M. Maurois, they procured ancient, forgotten, dust-covered biographies which they refreshed and

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

'stylized' with happy phrases. Like indigent dramatists turning novels into plays, they turned history books into novels. Writers and lawyers, statesmen and churchmen, soldiers, sailors, pirates, adventurers, financiers, actors and actresses, queens, prostitutes, debauchees and criminals, — all the most notorious 'stars' of the past, — found themselves travestied and novelized.

The success was such that M. Maurois deplored his inability to patent literary inventions as he had patented industrial processes. One consolation remained — his own articles were always the most sought after. He delighted both the refined and the vulgar, and sold in tens of thousands in all parts of the world. People cabled him magnificent offers for the translation rights of his forthcoming masterpiece, his *Life of Disraeli*, on which, according to the press agents, he had been laboring among a mountain of documents.

It is true that M. Maurois labored on the *Life of Disraeli*, but he labored on it just as he had labored on the *Life of Shelley* — with a single work (in six volumes, it is true) before him. Having dealt with a poet and dreamer, he turned his attention toward an *arriviste* politician and a man of action as much to please himself — since Disraeli was a man of his own race — as to appeal to his public.

Although Disraeli had been dead for only fifty years, and although he enjoyed universal notoriety while still alive, he was even more unknown in France than Percy Bysshe Shelley. Dead politicians are forgotten even quicker than other dead people, and Disraeli had been celebrated during the Second Empire and the first decade of the Third Republic. In the distant time of Louis Philippe some of the novels which he wrote during his youth enjoyed a brief success among the curious.

The best novel this Jew ever created was his own life — by Lord Buckle. This work is one of those pedestals that the English have a way of erecting to all who have served the Empire well, and it was hailed by the entire English press as a definitive and capital biography. The echo of its praises, however, scarcely penetrated to the other side of the Channel, and one would be running no more risks in appropriating its substance than one would with Dr. Dowden's book.

M. André Maurois, therefore, embarked upon a rapid translation, compressing and condensing as best he could, and ending up with his famous flourish. In this way he reduced the six volumes to a neat little book of three hundred and thirty pages, for which he composed a deceptive bibliography from references gleaned among the footnotes of the original volume. In this way he justified the absurd and commonplace manifesto that was published by the *Nouvelles Littéraires* on the first of May, 1926, under the *passe-partout* pseudonym of 'Frédéric Lefèvre': —

'What I should like to do would be to arrive at a knowledge of a person of the past that would be as good, and consequently as bad, as my knowledge of a living person whom I believe I understand. There is only one way of accomplishing this, which is to confront all witnesses. One must read enormously, and in doing so one must take care not to read everything. It is not in the big official biography, it is in the memoirs of some unknown person, some obscure courtesan, that you will suddenly discover the precious unique detail that puts an entirely new face on the character under investigation. Patience is needed, and industry.'

The bibliography placed at the head

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the *Life of Disraeli* produced the expected effect. The number of volumes cited made an imposing impression on hack reviewers and ignorant readers, all of whom rhapsodized over the vast and profound erudition of M. André Maurois. What patience, what labor, what research, had gone into the making of the diverse aspects of the impressive Disraeli in all his many attitudes, and how many books the author had restrained from reading — books that lacked the charm his possessed. Being a novelist, he showed up the nearsighted, pedantic scholars, all of whom he surpassed with his delightful gift of story-telling and the magic of a gay, glistening, scented prose full of British humor.

The *Life of Disraeli* fulfilled the magnificent promises that had been discerned in M. Maurois's earlier work. His ripe talent was approaching perfection. M. Maurois was the hope of French literature, which had suffered such a cruel loss in the death of Anatole France. He alone could fill the place left empty by the death of the illustrious and lamented master whom he resembled in so many ways — in his taste for historical speculation, his exquisite irony, his seductive style, and his assiduous labor. But unlike the author of the *Life of Joan of Arc*, the author of the *Life of Shelley* did not chide or mock his own century while he was invoking the atmosphere of the past. He moved about in the world. Together with Jean Cocteau and the Pitoëffs, he was the ornament of salons where Proust, Valéry, the Fratellini Brothers, and Charlie Chaplin are discussed over a cup of tea. Without effort, he revealed himself as a masterful snob whose epigrams were always spiced with English quotations.

M. Maurois breathes strength and self-confidence. He is active and laborious. Machines interest him more than the humanities. He has faith in mechanical progress. The latest inventions have no more fervent worshiper than he. M. Maurois believes that science, far from ousting literature, is helping to establish the reign of letters all over the world, diffusing them through the cinema and the radio to the four points of the compass.

The tumult of modern capitals, the haste and fever in the air we breathe, have stimulated production. No longer does one write for one's own pleasure, but for the pleasure of the great movie-going, newspaper-reading public. To take pains over one's work, to polish it page by page, to doubt one's self and one's accomplishments, was all very well before literature had been industrialized. Now we must hustle, scamp, and dictate. The whole secret of success is to hit upon an original manner and to popularize it skillfully. Reputations are built by advertising. If this sloppy century overdoes them, no matter — it is a clever stroke. The tower of ivory has seen its day, and posthumous fame, a problematic thing at best, is a vain lure. In short, art has become social, it is available to all persons and to all grades of intelligence. The writer has become a public man like the politician and the comedian. He must make contacts with his dear readers and try out his seductive charms on them at first hand.

M. André Maurois has not evaded this agreeable and profitable obligation. When his numerous readers and transatlantic friends manifested a desire to see and hear him, he departed for the United States. Like an 'ace' of the prize ring or a music-hall star, he exhibited himself in all the big cities — New York, Boston, and Philadelphia — and in the chief universities, such as Harvard, Yale, and Princeton.

M. André Maurois will surely be elected to the French Academy, for

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

many literary harlequins are already established there. Having pillaged English biography, he will find his place all marked for him in this illustrious company. He is in their tradition. Thanks to him, plagiarism can be considered one of the fine arts. In the 'sixties,' as he would say in English, the thankless task of adaptation was consigned to a pack of poor devils who tried to translate and summarize stories by English travelers for the powerful Hachette publishing house. These mercenaries had strange scruples that prevented them from putting their own names on the covers of their translations instead of the names of the authors. M. André Maurois has not allowed himself to be bothered by any such outworn code, and he himself coolly signs the works that he has liberally translated — for his 'novelized lives' are nothing more or less than abbreviated translations.

He boasts of this in the preface of *Ariel*, where he says: 'The author has wished to make this book the work of a novelist much more than the work of an historian or critic. The facts are unquestionably true; and the author has not made Shelley responsible for a single phrase or thought that does not appear in the memoirs of his friends or in his own letters or poems. However, the author is forced to arrange these real elements in such a way that they will produce the impression of progress, discovery, and natural growth that seems proper to the novel.'

With an air of false modesty, M. Maurois insinuates that he consulted a considerable number of books, — the very ones, in fact, that he enumerates at the beginning or end of his own volumes, — and in this way pretends to have uncovered the essential traits of his characters. When this preparatory work — which he actually has never been known to undertake — has been finished, he gives the impression of having worked on the amorphous dough, hardened it, modeled it, and breathed into it the breath of life. In short, he represents himself as a kind of Demiurge imparting body and soul to something that has previously been confused and inert.

If this assertion of M. Maurois were exact, he could be excused for giving his sources. But it is not exact. Simply to exalt his own works, M. Maurois depreciates those that he has pillaged. He never took the trouble to assemble or coördinate Shelley's sparse characteristics. This double labor is entirely the work of Dr. Dowden, whom M. Maurois was content to plagiarize and copy. He has reconstituted nothing, imagined nothing, romanticized nothing. Sketches and silhouettes, descriptions, itineraries, and dates, states of soul, psychological deductions, moral and philosophic reflections, the design and color, the special emphasis, the poetry, the very title of his book, are all in Dr. Dowden's work, which he followed volume by volume, page by page, sometimes summarizing, sometimes copying whole pages, removing quotation marks here, and in other places changing 'he' to 'I' for the convenience of his story. Such audacity seems hardly credible, but here are several typical examples of M. Maurois's plagiarism.

Text of Dowden, page 4: —

> Timothy Shelley had a wrong-headed way of meaning well and doing ill; he had a semi-illiterate regard for letters, a mundane respect for religion. . . . In private life he was kindly, irritable, and despotic. . . . He was profoundly diplomatic in matters of little consequence. Mingling with his self-importance, there was a certain sensibility, genuine though not deep, and tears of tenderness or vexation came readily to his eyes: a kindly, pompous, capricious, well-meaning, ill-doing, wrong-headed man.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Text of Maurois, page 13: —

Il [Timothy Shelley] avait meilleur cœur que sir Bysshe, mais un esprit beaucoup moins ferme. M. Timothy avait de bonnes intentions; cela le rendait insupportable. Il aimait les lettres avec l'irritante maladresse des illettrés. Il affectait un respect mondain pour la religion. . . . Il avait facilement les larmes aux yeux, mais pouvait devenir féroce si sa vanité était en jeu. Dans la vie privée, il se piquait de manières affables, mais aurait bien voulu concilier la douceur des formes avec le despotisme des actions. Diplomate dans les petites choses, brutal dans les grandes, inoffensif et irritant, il était fait pour donner terriblement sur les nerfs d'un juge sévère.

Text of Dowden, pages 441 and 442: —

The evening was most beautiful; the sands slowly receded; we felt safe; there was little wind, the sails flapped in the flagging breeze. The moon rose, the night came on, and with the night a slow, heavy swell and a fresher breeze which soon came so violent as to toss the boat very much.

Text of Maurois, page 172: —

Le soir était beau; les grandes falaises blanches diminuèrent lentement; les fugitifs se virent sauves. Bientôt la brise se leva, et s'en fla vite en vent violent. . . . La lune descendit lentement sur l'horizon, puis dans la totale obscurité, un orage éclata dont les éclairs frappaient à coups rapides la mer noire et gonflée. Enfin le jour parut, l'orage s'éloigna, le vent mollit et le large soleil se leva sur la France.

Text of Dowden, Volume II, page 229: —

Mary's journey had, indeed, been neither rapid nor agreeable. At Florence she was detained an entire day, while waiting for a signature to her passport. Little Clara, in whose baby face Mary discovered a remarkable likeness to Shelley, suffered from an attack of dysentery, caused by heat, fatigue, and the troubles of teething, and when they reached Este she was dangerously ill. The physician at Este was a stupid fellow.

Text of Maurois, page 251: —

Le voyage de Mary fut pénible; à Florence elle eut des difficultés de passeport qui la retinrent assez longtemps; la petite Clara, qui faisait ses dents, souffrit beaucoup de la chaleur, de la fatigue, du changement de lait et arriva à Este assez malade. . . . Le médecin d'Este paraissait tout à fait stupide.

It would be easy but a work of supererogation to extend the parallelism. A volume of three hundred pages would hardly be sufficient for the task.

M. Maurois has treated the work of Mr. Monypenny and Lord Buckle in the same way, his *Life of Disraeli* being merely a shortened copy of theirs. True, M. Maurois does Buckle the honor of mentioning him among a crowd of others whose names he lifted from the six-volume work that he pillaged. And he contents himself by stating: 'I take this opportunity to emphasize how much I owe to Mr. Buckle, whose life of Disraeli contains most of the documents quoted.' It contains many other things besides. What M. André Maurois owes to the late Monypenny and Buckle is his entire so-called novelized *Life of Disraeli*, not one line of which he could ever have written if these gentlemen had not preceded him. Had he really accomplished this task himself he would have had to consecrate twelve years of his life to it.

The foregoing comparison of texts not only reveals the plagiarism committed by M. Maurois; it also shows that the original is much more effective than the copy. M. Maurois deforms and disfigures everything he touches. He shatters the equilibrium and harmony of the works he manipulates. In his own justification he alleges that 'it is very difficult to give a kind of unity and beauty to a real life. It resists. It

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is what it is. It wanders about in every direction. Twenty times over it recommences the same motifs at the very moment when one wants them the least. For two years a life is full of lively interest, then for twenty other years it is a deadly bore.'

M. Maurois's historical method is childishly simple. It consists of getting the best biography of the person whose life he is going to novelize from the *Dictionary of National Biography* and arranging it in French.

The books he has mutilated in this way are all works of the first order, masterpieces that command respect and admiration. But 'there are hands that respect nothing,' as Barbey d'Aurevilly said of another plagiarist, Ponsard. M. Maurois has laid his sacrilegious hands on Dowden's marvelous life of Shelley. He has looted Monypenny and Buckle's life of Disraeli. All M. Maurois's productions, all the scenarios he has derived from English books, are poor and useless. It is a gallery of fakes. The originals may be found in London, but happily for M. Maurois's reputation his naïve readers do not doubt him.

M. Maurois could reply that the English themselves have bowed down before the originality of his talent and have translated his books one after the other. This would be a shabby defense. Everyone knows that English editors have a way of publishing abridged editions of all important works for the benefit of the general public. M. Maurois has provided them with the grist of this kind, and they have been glad enough to have his books on their list. Furthermore, the fact that he was a foreigner gained him the indulgence — *honoris causa* — of such distinguished literary judges as Sir Edmund Gosse. And, besides, the translation of a translation disguises plagiarism. What can remain of a text of Shelley translated from English into French by M. Maurois and then translated back again from French into English?

The day will come, before his election to the Academy, when it will be perceived that M. Maurois has usurped his reputation. People will realize that he is not a creator, but a copyist, a hornet who has looted the beehives across the Channel, a jay disguised as a peacock with feathers rifled from Shelley and Dr. Dowden, from Disraeli and Mr. Monypenny and Lord Buckle. When that day arrives his most warm-hearted critic will publicly confess his error and will recognize that the prose writer and moralist whom he has so pompously praised is nothing but a literary industrialist fabricating romanticized novels pillaged from English authors, an archplagiarist well worthy of leading off the next edition of that special anthology by M. Georges Maurevert known as *The Book of Plagiarists.*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

'HEARTBREAK HOUSE' IN PARIS[1]

BY GASTON RAGEOT

EVERY dramatic writer is at bottom a moralist in disguise, and every moralist is at bottom the enemy of the customs he is describing. It seems to be impossible to observe attentively the conduct of men and women without condemning it. Optimists do not look; they live. Pessimists do not live; they look.

The moralists indulge in two forms of severity. They take either the side of human nature or the side of society — or sometimes even both. The latter is certainly the case with Bernard Shaw, though he often adds a third attitude expressive of the two others; for besides being the enemy of humanity and the enemy of society in general, he is the enemy of a definite society — English society. He has taken upon himself the mission of denouncing the hypocrisy of his native country and exposing the lies upon which all the apparent equilibrium and visible respectability of British institutions and conduct are based.

When he decided to write his triumphant masterpiece about our national heroine he indeed showed lively sympathy for the militant virgin, but he loved her chiefly because she inflicted a humiliation and an opprobrium on his compatriots. This theme gave him the finest opportunity to utter truths, or at least what he takes to be truths, to a people who make a point of honor of never changing.

Furthermore, does this moral revolt against English society consist only of observation? Must we not take other elements into account — not only temperament, but the very origins of Shaw himself?

Every play of Bernard Shaw's is a passionate satire on English customs. This satire is not only relentless, but it is usually so precise that it can hardly be applied to other countries. Quite possibly the favor which Bernard Shaw's works enjoy abroad is partially explained by this fact, for it is always agreeable, entirely apart from any sympathies or antipathies, to feel that one's neighbor is more vitally impaled than one's self.

That is the first characteristic thing about Bernard Shaw. The second is that the kind of psychology he goes in for, whether it is arrived at instinctively or as a result of reflection, succeeds not only in England but in every other country, and he is the only man who knows how to develop it. The world we live in is a stupid, blasé world. Our wild search for novelty and the rapid rhythm of events prevent public attention from focusing, even for an instant, on skillful work executed in neutral colors. One must write in capital letters. And any truth, to be understood, has to be presented in the form of a paradox. Without scandal all is lost.

Bernard Shaw has therefore made a specialty of paradox and scandal. He is eccentricity personified. He constantly tries to astonish his audience, to bewilder it, even to offend it, striving above all else for its attention, which

[1] From *Revue Bleue* (Paris literary and political semimonthly), *February* 18

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

alone permits him later to charm, hold, and fascinate it. This desire not only makes itself felt in the form of ideas and moral observations; it enters into his whole dramatic art. Bernard Shaw would be just as ashamed of writing a regular play as he would of holding an accepted opinion. He wreaks the same havoc among our dramatic prejudices that he does among our moral lies.

This leads us to the third characteristic in Bernard Shaw's work — a combination of the other two. In order to lay about him more freely and to surprise his audience, he is reduced to dealing in pure fantasy. Fiction is his domain. There is no such thing as a serious play, any more than there is a solid society without conventions. His characters as well as his intrigues have to be presented to us shorn of all their ordinary trappings. They are unreal, and refuse to conform to traditions. One cannot, however, engage in combat with any society or any system of æsthetics without first inventing a new form of society and a new æsthetic code of one's own. Bernard Shaw, therefore, presents to us the spectacle of a world that he himself has made.

In *Heartbreak House*, which has been played with such success at the Pitoëffs' theatre, we witnessed a fantasy in the Russian manner.

The scene is laid in a strange house arranged like a boat inside, chiefly because its owner, Captain Shotover, is an old sailor who spent an exalted youth of adventure and peril. This highly eccentric creature rushes about, works, utters cruel words and bitter reflections, but never stays still. He works at carpentry as he talks, he carries his guests' suitcases, and fixes their rooms. He is supposed to have sold his soul to the Devil in Zanzibar, and from time to time he makes inventions to support his family.

His family is no less strange than he himself. It consists of two daughters, one of whom he does not recognize. She has led an adventurous life and dragged men after her like slaves. The other, who is married to a seducer, lives with her husband and goes in for seduction just as much as her husband does. And who can tell? Perhaps all these characters have broken hearts.

In any case, here is what happens. A girl arrives in this house, accompanied by her old father. She is charming and ingenuous. She believes in love. Her father is also charming and ingenuous, and he also believes in something — not in love, to be sure, but in honest business. He has been fleeced by a real business man, who made good for what he did by giving the old man a subordinate position. This business man, moreover, fell in love with the daughter and asked for nothing better than that she should be his wife.

The girl, however, has experienced a great love. She has made the acquaintance of a young man in whom she has placed her faith. This young man now steps on the stage, suitcase in hand. He is the seductive husband of one of the young ladies of the house, and has been lying outrageously to the poor ingenuous girl. The child's heart breaks, but in her sorrow she understands life, and asks why she should not marry the old business man. He has ruined her father, and if she could get back his money that would be only just. Unfortunately she can only do this by marrying him. But no matter. If you lack love, at least you might as well escape poverty.

The captain of industry is then presented as an implacable creature of remarkable ferocity. In reality, however, he is afraid of his workers and is incapable of conducting his enterprises himself. As is the case with all great captains of industry, his soldiers are the ones who win his victories, for in busi-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

ness, as in war, commanders hardly count at all.

This play contains no dramatic composition whatever in the ordinary sense of the word. There are no sudden turns of fortune, no theatrical strokes, and not a trace of exposition or dénouement. One simply feels a kind of moral classification of characters. On the one side there are those who represent society, English society — the burning siren, and the lovely, heartless woman of the world whose only pleasure is the service of her adorers. There are also the romantic hero, the born slave and diplomatic flatterer, the fake financier, and the honest thief.

These are contrasted with the characters dear to the heart of Bernard Shaw. There is the old sea king who on account of his age is hastily pursuing the idea of an invention that will explode all the explosives in the world and thus destroy all humanity. But even more important than he is the disabused innocent girl just being initiated into life.

We are thus led to a rather unexpected conclusion about Bernard Shaw. It is the same conclusion that we always reach in regard to people who wear the most hardy and emancipated appearance. In short, we soon discover that all these paradoxical trappings and all this scandal rest on a thoroughly banal philosophy, whose fundamental principles are extremely elementary. Society is badly constructed, and life is deceptive. Youth must shape itself, and, as de Musset says, 'Nothing makes us so great as a great sorrow.' After her deception the little girl understands life. There is no wisdom, no reason, no virtue, and unquestionably no happiness, except in broken hearts.

In brief, Bernard Shaw is a clever man, whose cleverness has consisted in brilliantly presenting to us the eternal principles of human resignation. He happened to be an Englishman and to be able to throw his bombs in the country where they made the most noise.

FARMING WITH ELEPHANTS[1]

BY TRACY PHILIPPS

ALTHOUGH the African elephant is still commonly believed to be untamable, its domestication has for several years been an accomplished fact. Both the original attempt and ultimate success — the reward of admirable persistence through many years — lie to the credit of the Belgians.

The value of the experiment, of course, apart from its interest, lies in the possibilities of the African elephant as a useful servant. The southern provinces of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan, the Ubangi-Shari Colony of French Equatoria, and the greater part of the two Uele districts of the Belgian Congo, adjoin each other. These territories form a very large tract of fertile, open, undulating country, well watered, with only a relatively sparse

[1] From the *Times* (London Independent Conservative daily), *March* 8

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and stunted bush. In this area the tsetse fly abounds, and horses and cattle cannot, therefore, live. Yet for colonists, missions, cotton and coffee planters, and agricultural tribes there is a growing need for the plough. It would decrease the menace of famine, increase both quality and quantity of foodstuffs, and release native labor. It is one of the objects of the twenty-five years of experiment to place at the disposal of tropical agriculture a valuable economic auxiliary. Ploughing by elephant, in local conditions, has proved to be fourteen times less costly than the same work done by tractor. There is, incidentally, some possibility that the feat of taming the African elephant has here been repeated rather than originated — this without prejudice to Belgian enterprise. The size of the ear and the slope of the forehead on the elephants depicted on Carthaginian coins of the period add weight to the supposition that Hannibal's beasts were of the African breed. Moreover, there seems no reason why in its less arid state the Sahara should not have provided the Carthaginian commander with the source of one of his most effective tactical corps.

In 1879 King Leopold ordered the importation into the Congo, by way of the east coast, of a number of Indian elephants, in the hope that they would prove useful for training purposes. They were unable to face the climate, and, dying, put an end to the experiment. Twenty-one years later the attempt was renewed by Commander Laplume, who captured a baby African elephant, only to find that immature specimens were unsuitable for training, both by reason of their delicacy and by lack of mental response.

The work took a more serious form in 1904, when the Belgian Government established an experimental farm at Api, in the Bas-Uele. A skilled white officer with picked native soldiers was placed in charge. In 1906 the elephants were worked regularly for the first time. Local natives of the Niam-Niam (Zandeh) tribe were then introduced as personnel to replace the soldiers. About thirteen years were thus spent in experiments as to the best methods of capture, feeding, and training. The year 1913, completing a period of thirteen years, may thus be said to mark the end of the first continuous period of training of the African elephant in modern times. In the second period, 1914–19, neither credits nor personnel were available to carry on the work. The local Political Officer saw to it that the elephants were fed and cared for. Training work remained of necessity at a standstill. The third period began in 1919, when a renewed effort was made to find and develop the natural aptitudes of the elephants and to improve the training. Six mahouts were obtained from the Indian Government on liberal terms of pay. They arrived very homesick, and proved to be less resistant to climatic conditions than Europeans. Moreover, they showed little aptitude for the local lingua franca, so that their relations with Europeans and natives were not of the easiest. They were soon repatriated to India, with the exception of one little fellow, who was also a skilled ropemaker.

But much had been learned from them. They had taught Burmese elephant songs to the Niam-Niam mahouts. These songs are still used in working the elephants, but are, without losing their cadence, gradually assuming Niam-Niam tunes, and, with the enrollment of new mahouts who have never heard the Indian songs sung by Indians, Zandeh words of similar sound are tending to supplant those of the original.

The fourth and present period of

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

development may be said to have started in 1921, when practical results began to appear. The capture of elephants by new and humane methods, designed to cause the fewest possible casualties in a herd, was begun again under the general direction of M. Magnette, assisted by Lieutenant Offermann, of the Guides. A capture party consists of a European, a detachment of ten well-disciplined native elephant-hunters, and a 'group' of about fifteen trained Niam-Niam youths. The latter group consists of five riflemen, seven men carrying rope of specified length, and three carriers of tools and rations. The trained elephants remain in readiness in the central camp. The party works usually within a radius of nineteen miles, with the camp as centre.

The party follow spoor, and come up with a herd, against wind, without giving the alarm. They inspect the herd to see if there are any of the right age. If one is selected, one of the hunters crouches in thick bush where he calculates the herd will pass. He awaits a favorable moment. Sometimes, but not often, the young one can be slightly detached from the main herd. There is a man behind the watcher armed for extreme emergency. The young elephant draws near the ambush. The man runs crouching from his hiding place and slips a noose-rope round a back leg or the tail. He then runs back, if possible along the line of the rope, into concealment, now down-wind from the main herd.

The young elephant moves off alarmed. The rest of the party rush to the rope-end, under escort. When the line grows taut the animal probably turns. If he rushes back suddenly a shot is fired over his head. After a struggle he often falls. The hunter runs up again and places another rope round his neck, securing the other end to the nearest tree. When all are occupied with holding the young animal there is sometimes a rush on them by an old male or a female. The latter is not always his mother, whom he, at such an age, has probably ceased to accompany.

It is in such emergencies only that the rifle is allowed to be used — that is, strictly in defense of human life. In last year's hunts, for twenty-four captures only one man was a casualty. He had allowed a hostile animal to get too near. The largest elephant captured last year was 1 metre, 83 centimetres in height. He was at the time no longer running with his mother, who had two younger ones at foot. When at last the young animal is safely tied up and secured and can definitely be considered a prize, a messenger is dispatched to the camp. There the larger trained elephants, known as *moniteurs*, are in readiness.

A pair of these monitors are dispatched to the scene. One raises and supports the young elephant, now exhausted. The other monitor stands by to help, and then marches along on the further side, to help or to deal with any return of recalcitrance. It is a curious fact that, on whatever side of the monitor the young animal is attached to leave the scene of capture, he will always continue to seek to march on the same side. If ever, by chance, he finds another animal temporarily occupying that side of his monitor, he usually drops behind and seems bewildered. The officer in charge has therefore, before sending out, to calculate on which side he has a permanent vacancy.

On arrival in camp the young elephant is kept quietly, under the best possible conditions. He is gradually accustomed to the close presence of man and increasingly familiarized with an individual monitor and an individual mahout, who feed and nurse him.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When the majority of the training elephants have a small one for each side, toward the end of the dry season the training begins, very quietly, but in earnest. No elephant is ever struck. The majority of elephants now employed in work are on an average about six feet in height. The Niam-Niam, or Zandeh, native provides exceptionally fine material for mahouts. He comes of a race whose sport was war, who fought their way, probably from near the Gulf of Guinea, to the equatorial forest. In more settled times elephant hunting with knife and spear has replaced their sport of war as a national pastime.

In addition to the original school at Api, the Belgian Government has recently established another at Gangara-na-Bodio, near the residence of the Niam-Niam chief, Wando, in the district of the Haut-Uele. As I was traveling in the neighborhood a few months ago, I took the opportunity of visiting it. By good fortune Lieutenant Offermann, the manager, was at home, and put his expert knowledge at my disposal.

Eight trained *moniteurs* were on parade, placid enough and flipping only an ear here and there as my car came to rest beside them. A little later they, with some of the elder pupils, were dismissed to 'pasture.' They moved off into the bush, with their mahouts seated well forward, free to browse in their own country and to seek out at their leisure whatever succulent morsels they prefer. Thus their feed in captivity is identical with their diet when free in the bush — and it costs nothing. The supply of leaves, herbage, and vegetation generally round the camp is practically inexhaustible. It springs up afresh twice a year after the greater and the lesser rains. The elephants receive each week fifty grammes of salt and a little local cassava. These are simply small delicacies, usually distributed in such a way as to mark the trainers' recognition of special cases of hard work or intelligence.

The mahouts looked very smart in their blue jerseys, with the gold star of the Congo emblazoned on the breast. One could not but notice the affectionate relations existing between the men and their beasts, who responded to the soft-toned orders very readily. We walked with the elephants for a short way into the bush and watched them begin to feed. All the animals were noticeably 'well groomed.' What few sores they had were clean and freshly smeared with antiseptic ointment. Later, in the heat of the day, they would go down to the river for the bath and drink. In the cool of the evening, if necessary, they would work again.

Leaving the trained elephants, we descended the steep bank to the river level. On a shady peninsula, just above water level, fourteen 'babies,' five female and nine male, were comfortably tethered under shady trees. As we got close in among them they were feeding contentedly. Only those whose capture dated from a few days previously showed any signs of nervousness. Two of them allowed their trunks to be stroked, but showed the greatest aversion to anyone passing behind them. They were tethered with strong, locally made rope, round the neck and round one hind foot. No sores or abrasions were visible as a result of the tethering.

All the young elephants were approximately between the ages of two and ten years. It is only very exceptionally that they are captured over ten. It is, however, extremely difficult to estimate, by height or by size of tusks alone, the age of a young elephant moving with a herd. It is interesting to note the recorded growth in captivity of the elephant named Bama. He was

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

captured in the Bas-Uele on August 2, 1902. On that day he measured 1 metre, 28 centimetres (about 4 feet, 2 inches) in height. A quarter of a century has now elapsed. He has remained throughout that time in his own district. He is now 2 metres, 50 centimetres (about 8 feet, 3 inches). That is to say, we have here an African elephant which, in his own climate and under natural feeding conditions, has grown 1 metre, 22 centimetres in twenty-five years.

Working on an average from 5 A.M. to 11 A.M., one elephant ploughs two and one-half acres of land in two days. The elephant, furthermore, can be, and is, used for other farm work, such as stumping, and for the collecting and piling of timber, as well as for transport in open country, as a feeder to or before construction of roads. Two of the elephants at the farm draw a cart carrying five tons of material. Elephants trained at the two farms are already in use by planters who are working on their own resources and by religious missions. Neither of these can afford to make costly experiments or to employ wasteful methods.

Four elephants are employed on the mission cultivations at Buta, two by Mr. de Steenhault de Waerbeke, a planter at Dembea, and others on a cotton farm at Bambessa. They are at present on hire. It is calculated that a trained elephant will sell for sixty thousand francs. The Government training farms should in time become entirely self-supporting.

The cost of maintenance is low. The food of the elephant, as I have said, consists almost entirely of twigs, leaves, and roots. Maintenance, including the pay of two men for each elephant, harness and chains, food 'extras,' ointments, and depreciation, works out at an approximate total of ten francs, or slightly over a shilling, a day for each elephant.

Lieutenant Offermann, to whom I am much indebted for his courtesy and information, is pressing for an extension of the system of elephant reserves on the same lines as the *Parc national* for gorillas north of Lake Kivu. There is a farm reserve north of his farm at Wando, but this he regards as inadequate, and with justice, in view of the vast numbers of elephants shot for ivory and, even more, for food. The Belgian Government is not blind to the importance of the question. By recent legislation no native may shoot an elephant with a modern rifle without purchasing a license costing five thousand francs, a very stiff price to relatively poorly paid chiefs, in the currency of the country.

Nevertheless, it is hard to believe that the elephant can in our generation decrease in numbers in the vast equatorial forest lands of the Congo Basin, where the destructiveness of modern firearms is obviously minimized. In fact, from observations in the Central Congo, one would even venture the opinion that both the elephant and the okapi are probably on the increase.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Murder — German Style

A GERMAN schoolboy tragedy which included both murder and suicide has set the Berlin boulevard press all agog, and even evoked columns of news copy in the conservative London *Daily Telegraph*. It appears that Paul Krantz, a seventeen-year-old schoolboy, addressed his youthful verse to Hildegard Scheller, the sister of his best friend, Guenther Scheller. She, in turn, encouraged Krantz's love by telling him that no girl would thank him for 'passion which expresses itself only in poems,' although she was simultaneously carrying on an affair with Hans Stephan, another schoolfellow.

On the tragic evening when Krantz called at the Scheller home to see Hildegard, he found her being entertained by his rival, Hans. Krantz, however, found a companion in Elinor Ratti, and the two couples seem to have spent the evening drinking and carousing. Then Guenther Scheller came home. Alcohol and his hatred for Hans merely brought to a head proposals long previously discussed and formulated by these boys, who had been steeping themselves in the more morbid German and Russian philosophies. Guenther would kill Hans, and Krantz would kill Hildegard, after which both boys would commit suicide. Since only Guenther went through with the agreement, Krantz was held for murder, and one of the most sensational criminal trials in Berlin was staged.

He was acquitted on the grounds that a 'joint decision' and not a 'joint agreement' had been made, and, 'although objectively murder or manslaughter took place, subjectively a punishable offense could not be assumed.' Such was the hair-splitting judgment of the Court, although journalists found material a-plenty in the disclosures at the trial and the motives for the crime to furnish reams of lurid copy for the daily press.

It was asserted that there are apparently whole sections of German society which are completely impervious to normal human sentiment. The Vice-Prefect of Police declared that he had never encountered such frivolous indifference and brazen mendacity as that of Hildegard Scheller when she was called to answer questions a few hours after her own brother had killed her lover and himself. When an experienced woman 'Councilor of Police' went to interview Hildegard's parents, she found the father bent over a table, his head in his hands. But his son's crime and subsequent suicide and the merciless dissection of his daughter's character in the law courts were not what had brought him low — he was merely deeply engrossed in the solution of a crossword puzzle.

Shortly after the trial started Hildegard began making the rounds of the Berlin newspaper offices with her father, offering interviews for twenty-five dollars apiece. Krantz spent most of his time in jail reading his favorite authors — Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and Dostoevskii. He received several offers to go on the vaudeville stage, and when he was released the crowds cheered him and scattered flowers on his head.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Many observers have criticized Germany by saying that this is typical of much to be found in that country to-day. For our part, we cannot find much difference between this story and what appears in our own sensational press. German journalists have merely learned how to exploit this kind of news.

Shaw and Strindberg

MR. SHAW, who characterizes himself as 'the great English dramatist,' has described his first and only meeting with Strindberg, whom he 'considered to be one of the great dramatists of Europe.' When Shaw was in Stockholm he felt that it was his duty to visit Strindberg, but people told him that the attempt would be futile. 'He is absolutely mad,' they said. 'He won't see anybody. He never takes a walk except in the middle of the night when there is nobody about. He attacks all his friends with the greatest fury. You will only be wasting your time.'

Shaw, however, sent him a note, and received in reply a very long letter written in French, German, and English, without a word of Swedish. Strindberg intimated that an interview would be useless, and said: 'I am dying of a mortal disease. I never see anybody. I never go into the streets except in the dead of night. I don't know your language. What is the use of a dumb man speaking to a dumb man?'

Strindberg had apparently changed his mind by the next morning, for George Bernard Shaw narrates: —

'A note came to say I was to go at once to see him. I went down to the Little Theatre. I asked, "What language does he speak?" I may mention that I am the worst possible linguist in the world. When I call upon a person who speaks a foreign language I have to make up their speeches beforehand and compose my reply. I was told that French was his language, so I put my little speech in French. Strindberg turned up and began speaking German. He was quite a pleasant-looking person, with the most beautiful sapphire-blue eyes I have ever seen. He was beyond expression shy. I am a shy man myself. My wife rose to the occasion and talked French to him, and after a time he came to himself, smiled, and we had an extremely pleasant talk. I told him that his plays ought to be performed not in the Little Theatre but in the Opera House. Nothing could be pleasanter or more charming, and no one could have imagined that he had been the intimate of one of those households he put on the stage.

'After a time he took his watch out and became gloomy. He said in German, "At two o'clock I am going to be sick." I felt that if he meant he was going to be sick instantaneously it would imply that my conversation had caused it. I hastily took my watch out, and saw that it was a quarter to two. There was no time to be lost, so my wife and I made our adieus and went away.'

This is indeed an interesting picture of the great Swedish dramatist, whose most familiar theme is the hatred between men and women. Shaw, however, explains that Strindberg wrote many other plays, including some fine historical dramas that have never been performed in England and that might do much to dispel the belief that Strindberg was, as Mr. Desmond MacCarthy has characterized him, 'always overshooting himself in malignity,— his insight was always hate-directed.'

Beecham on America

SIR THOMAS BEECHAM, who visited America this past winter and conducted several symphony concerts, has

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

returned to England to spread the Gospel of Opera and, like all good foreign visitors, to tell his compatriots something about our 'sweet land of liberty.' Sir Thomas, however, is not hypercritical, and the one thing that he perhaps regretted the most was that while in America his scheme to popularize opera in England went into a decline.

He condones rather than condemns the American press, which has been accused of misrepresenting him. He smilingly described it as a 'very lively institution. Very lively — and very entertaining sometimes. If you don't give some American newspapers interviews, they make up interviews. And, you know, it is almost impossible to explain or contradict afterward, because people will hardly believe you.' For example, Sir Thomas had sent out invitations to a large number of students in London requesting them to attend a meeting to boost the Imperial League of Opera scheme. Very few turned up, and when he visited America Sir Thomas was asked by an American reporter how he explained this. He jocularly replied that the students must have been a lazy lot. By the time this remark had passed through the hands and heads of the reporter, rewrite man, copy reader, and city editor, Sir Thomas was reported to have said that the English people were the laziest on earth.

In discussing music in America he said that the great American orchestras were admittedly supreme. While America may have about seventeen permanent orchestras which play first-class music every day for about eight months in the year, no such orchestra, Sir Thomas laments, is to be found in England. He also answered the usual argument leveled at us that Americans can buy anything with their money. 'I know it is said that American people have the material resources to apply to the building-up of fine orchestras. Let me say, first of all, that the wonderful resources of America are not so visible to the eye as you would expect. You see more evidence of the spending of money in London and Paris than in New York. But apart from that, these orchestras have been created out of superior material resources.' He then explained that, although America was no richer than England before the war, the New York Philharmonic Orchestra was founded eighty years ago, the Boston Symphony Orchestra more than fifty years ago, and the Philadelphia Orchestra some thirty years ago. 'All the money in the world would not have created those orchestras without the will to do it, without a musical impulse behind the movement.'

So seldom is American music or literature praised abroad that we are almost forced to wonder ungraciously whether Sir Thomas was carried away by his cordial welcome in this country, or whether he is merely trying to arouse the English to support his opera scheme. But such doubts would be rude and unkind, and perhaps Sir Thomas is right.

A Sardinian Brigand

After having enjoyed perhaps the most notorious career in modern Sardinian brigandage, Samuele Stocchino has been shot dead by the Carabinieri. According to a special correspondent of *Corriere della Sera*, Stocchino followed the classic model and was an avenger rather than a robber. The vendetta ran in his blood, for his father had been sentenced to twenty years' penal servitude. Although Stocchino was but thirty-two years old, eleven men had fallen by his dagger or his gun, and a price of two hundred thousand lire had been set upon his head. During the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

World War he distinguished himself by extraordinary bravery, at one time entering an enemy trench alone and fighting like a lion, but with the advent of peace he returned to the mountain fastnesses of the wild province of Nuoro in Sardinia, there to pursue his vendettas. He was merciless, and upon the body of every victim he pinned a note admitting his guilt and naming his next victim. He never failed to carry out his threats.

For eight years he was sought by the Carabinieri, but theirs was no easy task, for the wild mountains and the broad marshlands offered many hiding places. Fearful of their own lives, the solitary shepherds, who saw much, told nothing. Stocchino, moreover, was exceedingly cautious, for he wore rubber shoes and walked as silently as a Cooper Indian. At night he never slept in a cave or hut, but on the open heath, with his gun in hand and wrapped in a mantle. At dawn he would climb to the nearest height and scrutinize all footpaths with field glasses. Those who brought him food were forced to taste it before he would touch it.

He had many *favoreggiatori*, or shelterers, among whom were the members of his family, his friends, those who feared him, and those who were paid for their services. Spies of the Carabinieri usually played a double game, serving Stocchino as well as the authorities. Occasionally he boldly entered a town, and three times he was surrounded, but he invariably escaped. Once he dressed like a woman and carried an amphora of water on his head; while another time he disguised himself as a monk.

His death was almost as picturesque as his life. A young man, posing as a brigand, succeeded in getting in touch with Stocchino without arousing his suspicions. The Carabinieri were informed, and they hid in ambush along a road, where they shot Stocchino while he was passing. Mortally wounded, he covered his head with his mantle and fell beneath a tree. His body lay there for a long time while all his relatives, from eleven families, all dressed in black, paraded by. As they passed they touched his left foot in order to break the tragic doom overhanging the family. Pieces of his clothes were distributed as amulets. As a final propitiatory rite, salt and dry olives were sprinkled by the people of Nuoro on the threshold of the 'cursed' house where Stocchino was born.

Alice in Manuscript

By the time that these lines are being devoured by an eager world some lucky bibliophile will have paid a staggering sum for the original manuscript of *Alice in Wonderland* — or *Alice's Adventures Under Ground*, as it was first called. Ever since 1862, when the ninety-two exquisitely written pages and the forty pen-and-ink sketches executed by the author himself were first inscribed, they have been in the possession of the person for whom they were composed — Alice Pleasance Liddell, now Mrs. Reginald Hargreaves. Her photograph, taken by the author himself with a camera of his own invention, appears on the final page of the manuscript, between the words 'summer' and 'days.'

Within a few years the manuscript had become so popular in Oxford that publication arrangements were made with Macmillan, and John Tenniel was chosen as the illustrator. Much of his inspiration was drawn from the author's own sketches, although the Duchess was copied from a painting of Margarete Maultasch, who has lately acquired fame through the pen of Dr. Lion Feuchtwanger. In July 1865 the first edition of *Alice* appeared, but

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tenniel found such fault with the woodcut reproductions of his work that the copies were withdrawn, and another edition came out in November of the same year. On rare occasions one of the few existing copies of the real first edition finds its way to the auction table, the most recent one having sold for £390 in April 1926 in London. A copy of the second edition fetched £200 in 1914.

Charles Lutwidge Dodgson — otherwise Lewis Carroll — was just over thirty when he wrote the first Alice book. He was a shy young mathematics instructor in Christ Church College, Oxford, of which Alice's father, also famous for his Greek lexicon, was the Dean. This majestic man and his charming wife were always surrounded by a 'garland of beautiful faces' in the Deanery, but the stammering young mathematician only felt at ease when in the company of little girls, of whom he was intensely fond. He never forgot Alice's childhood days, and in one of his presentation books to her years afterward when she was a married woman he refers to the 'many pleasant memories of bygone hours in Wonderland.' In 1885 Mrs. Hargreaves consented to release the original manuscript for the purpose of facsimile reproduction, the proceeds of the sale being devoted to hospitals and homes for children. On this occasion she is parting, not only with the manuscript, but with signed copies of the French, Italian, and German translations.

Dark Secrets

THE Prince of Wales, the Prime Minister of England, and Sir James Barrie were all included in an exposure of 'dark secrets' during the course of several after-dinner speeches at the second annual banquet of the Worcestershire Association. According to the whimsical Sir James Barrie, the secret of Stanley Baldwin is that he absolutely abominates pipe-smoking. Barrie supposed that all his auditors had seen the Prime Minister 'smoking a pipe — trying to smoke a pipe — not even holding the thing properly.' He explained that a newspaper had once made a mistake and published a picture with Mr. Baldwin holding a pipe in his mouth, and that the public liked it so much that 'rather than disappoint them he goes on smoking the horrible thing. But if you would see the Prime Minister at his best, when he hears a hundred nightingales, it is when he has thrown that loathly thing aside and lights his beloved cigarette.' Sir James was not averse to baring his own 'dark secret.' It appears that when he attended school the girls once voted that he had the sweetest smile in the establishment, which made him so self-conscious that he has never smiled since.

Stanley Baldwin, for his part, declared that the time for reticence on the dark secret of Sir James Barrie had now passed, and that the Prime Minister himself would betray him. Sir James Barrie, he said, was a teetotaler and nonsmoker originally, but in his early days he wrote a story or an essay or something of the sort called 'My Lady Nicotine.' An enterprising tobacconist asked Sir James for the original of the 'Arcadian Mixture,' but Barrie did not know the names of any tobacco manufacturers. While on a walk 'he saw a little advertisement of Craven Mixture, and he wrote at once and said the Arcadian Mixture was Craven Mixture. Its fame was made. For very shame Sir James Barrie took to the pipe that night, and he has kept to it ever since.'

The Prince of Wales made a characteristically witty speech, but it would appear that either he is a poor dispenser of secrets or else the reporter at the

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

banquet completely missed the point of the Prince's story. At any rate, here is the account published in one of London's Conservative dailies: 'I will tell you a secret. Lord Plymouth happened to have a very good friend, and that good friend happened to be one of my private secretaries. He did exactly as I do when I find myself in rather a tight corner — he flew to my private secretary for help. But I got in first.'

The Ballet in Russia

REAL Russian ballet — not the Diaghilev version — can still be found in Moscow, where the Imperial tradition flourishes in spite of political changes. Russian troupes abroad have gone in for foreign themes and new experiments, while the dancers who stayed at home stick much more closely to the old technique and show the effects of the Revolution only in the plots that they are forced to interpret. They have attended a bitter school. During the famine of 1921 and 1922 the audience would huddle themselves in greatcoats, while the performers disported themselves with more than usual agility just to keep warm. Everyone was hungry and miserable, but a Russian can no more go without his ballet than an Englishman can dispense with his tiffin.

The current success, one of those whimsical Bolshevist versions of the Chinese situation, is entitled 'The Red Poppy.' It seems that a Russian ship is unloading its cargo in a Chinese port, and the poor coolies keep slipping on the gangway and being lashed by their cruel overseer. The warm-hearted Russian captain orders his crew to lend a hand, and these intelligent fellows show the coolies how to form a chain from the ship to the shore and pass the bales from hand to hand. In the next act we meet Red Poppy herself in a local opium joint. Here the producer stages a series of 'Visions of Old China' which represent the girl's opium dreams. These are the finest parts of the whole performance, and by far the most lavish. As many as three hundred people are on the stage at a single time, wearing costumes as magnificent as the scenery against which they disport.

The last act shows the ball given by the 'wicked imperialists.' British and American sailors are represented as living in a state of malicious coöperation that surpasses the wildest dreams of the English-Speaking Union. The Red Poppy also appears, and is ordered to offer poison to the nice Russian captain. Her finer instincts rebel, and she dashes the fatal cup from his lips — only to be slain for her disobedience.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOOKS ABROAD

All or Nothing, by J. D. Beresford. London: W. Collins, Son, and Company, 1928. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

[*Manchester Guardian*]

JAMES BLEDLOE was the son of a cranky scholar and a Welsh peasant woman. From his father he inherited a fastidious intellect, from his mother a revivalistic tendency. It was an incapacitating inheritance in which 'I would not' waited persistently upon 'I would.' From childhood he was in the position of 'liking to do something if I could think of anything I wanted frightfully to do.' But everything on examination proved to be 'hardly worth while.' It seemed to lead to nothing. Necessity did not help to solve the problem, since on his father's death he found himself a millionaire; nor did a journey round the world, nor marriage with a girl who had had a lover and confessed to it. His wife, however, continued to have lovers, and this, together with war disillusionment, transformed his idealism from an incapacitating negative into a fertile positive. The process was gradual, and consisted for some time in efforts at self-understanding and even in backsliding. But a final disillusionment precipitated the fundamental change in his personality for which he had been unconsciously waiting all his life. His idealistic impulse broke through the inhibitions which had surrounded it. He discovered a meaning at last, not in any particular activity, but in everything. In short, he experienced conversion, and the new spiritual force which he thus acquired, and which incidentally compelled him to abandon his wealth and become a cobbler in Camden Town, enabled him to convert a newspaper proprietor, a club secretary, and at last even his wife.

Mr. Beresford has analyzed the stages by which his hero reached an inner freedom with skill and subtlety, but he gives us more of the psychology of conversion than the reality. And possibly that is why we cannot believe in the power with which Bledloe is at last credited. For neither he nor any other characters in the book are really individualized. They represent rather certain attitudes of mind which come into conflict, to affect one another or remain unaffected. As a piece of psychological research into the forces and lethargies which strive for the citadel of the human consciousness culminating in a real apprehension of the singleness of being to which it must finally evolve, his book is deeply interesting. But it has too little organic necessity to satisfy as a work of art.

The Life of Lord Curzon, by the Earl of Ronaldshay. Vol. I. London: Ernest Benn; New York: Boni and Liveright, 1928. $15.00 for set of three volumes.

[*Manchester Guardian*]

THE life of George Curzon until he, in 1898, sailed to India as Viceroy is not very different from that of other young men of his class and time. Eton, Balliol, the House of Commons; society, travel, the attainment of office — there were many others who traveled the same or a very similar road. Because it is the traveler and not the road that is interesting, Lord Ronaldshay, while relating sometimes in too much detail trifling events in Curzon's career, aims in this first volume rather at revelation than chronicle, at biography rather than history. In the precocious, sternly disciplined boy consumed with ambition, acutely conscious of ability, cursed with bodily ill-health, and blessed with astonishing strength of will and power of concentration, we are to see in embryo the Curzon of Delhi and of Lausanne. Even as a young man he was 'superior.' It was a superiority that left bitterness, but it was not meant bitterly. There was nothing of snobbery in it; it was the result of stern test of his own powers, and it was the obvious expression of his own knowledge of them in the absence of specific

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

challenge. His academic career is largely the acceptance of what he thought were challenges — winning the first prize after absenting himself from the class, carrying off a coveted distinction not in his own subject, and so disproving an adverse verdict.

From early days he set before himself definite ambitions and deliberately trained himself for their attainment. When he entered the Commons he alienated members by his nonchalant assurance; it was an assurance that had taken years to win. His lofty attitude that so irritated Labouchere and so many others had its origin undoubtedly in sheer conceit of youth; it was also, as critics came to realize, the result of the intellectual conviction that hours of intense labor had given him superior knowledge. That it was expressed in phrases that left a sting was unfortunate and resented, but there was more in his mordant speech than sheer malice; there was the tired irritation of a sick man.

For all these years Curzon was a sick man, suffering intermittently from a painful spinal weakness. Weakness was his deepest aversion, and his life was a long battle between an iron will and the temptation to rest when his enemy pressed him harder than usual. When it did, his reaction to the pressure was to look to those distant goals of his and work the harder. The amount of work he did was literally prodigious, and much of it was unnecessary. Trained as a boy to manage his own life, he learned his lesson so well that he never could hand over much to others to manage. It was a fault that later was to injure him; in these early days it simply exhausted his strength needlessly, and that meant making the road to his ambitions longer and more difficult. To the battle against external opposition and internal weakness he had to add a battle against temperament and training.

It was a battle that might well have hardened him, but there was nothing hard about Curzon. His ambition was never merely acquisitive. Power he coveted not only for its own sake but for the sake of furthering the causes he had at heart. That saved him from being the self-centred, overbearing egoist that many thought him. Obstacles he treated with respect; with interruptions he was impatient, and many of his fellows resented being treated as interruptions. They objected, as one phrased it, to being treated as black beetles. They did not realize that to this sensitive, ambitious soul, keenly conscious alike of his abilities and his weaknesses, they were worse than beetles; they represented a waste of time. But when there was time to waste, no one could waste it better than the 'superior person.' He was the life and soul of the little society in which he moved — a warm-hearted friend, a brilliant talker, an artist endowed with a profound feeling for beauty, and a thinker gifted with a fine sense of artistic values. But these qualities were shown only to his friends, who repaid him by affectionate devotion which finds time and again remarkable expression in these pages. When he left for India he had made his name familiar as journalist and as parliamentarian to every newspaper reader, but the man himself was known only to a few friends. Behind the rather complacent, too self-possessed politician they saw the seeker, the artist, the mystic. No one else did, and as the years went on these became more difficult to see.

In that lay his ultimate tragedy, but so far as his life is traced in these able and eloquent pages the element of tragedy rarely appears. They form a record of steady and brilliant achievement, of ambition nobly conceived and realized, of a life moving impressively toward fulfillment. They end on a note of exultation, with Curzon, in a full enthusiasm of attainment in which pride and humility are strangely mingled, setting out to enjoy through high service the realization of a great ambition. The tragedy is still to come.

The Tower, by W. B. Yeats. London: Macmillan, 1928. 6*s*. net.

[*Morning Post*]

In the highways of poetry all that we see or hear, howsoever mysterious and majestical, is like Lear's hand in that it smells of mortality. The greatest poets of all time — Homer, Vergil, Dante, and Shakespeare — remain men among men even when they achieve that last secret of a triumphant style which Dante describes when he de-

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fines the *dolce stil nuovo*. It is because they never cease to be our fellow mortals that, despite their at times intolerable greatness, they are nearer and dearer to us still than the few lesser poets, very few indeed, who have somehow quite escaped from this sublunary sphere of

> . . . wood, brick, stone, this ring
> of the rueful neighbors.

We that be creatures of earth, prisoners in our workaday world, are never quite at our ease with the lonely travelers who return to us with a pointed parable — where more is meant than meets the eye, from the far, mysterious meadows ruled by that lady bright who came riding down by the Eildon Tree.

Mr. W. B. Yeats is a latter-day Thomas the Rhymer, and the songs he made when the memories of the lands beyond the *flammantia mœnia mundi* possessed his spirit still have power to shake our hearts out of everyday ease. He is now, alas, a little ashamed of his experiences of Elfland. In his new volume of poems we find him vexed by realities, above all by the squalid reality of old age. The Ireland of to-day, it seems, is no country for old men, so full it is of sounds and sights of young life blossoming to fruition: —

> Caught in that sensual music all neglect
> Monuments of unaging intellect.

So he voyages to the holy city of Byzantium and utters his prayer aloud to the elder singers: —

> O sages standing in God's holy fire
> As in the gold mosaic of a wall,
> Come from the holy fire, perne in a gyre,
> And be the singing masters of my soul.
> Consume my heart away; sick with desire
> And fastened to a dying animal
> It knows not what it is; and gather me
> Into the artifice of eternity.

Again, in the long and mystical meditation which gives the book its title, he likens his old age to a battered kettle tied to a dog's tail. And so looks to the time when the evil disabilities of old age — worst of them all the death of friends and of friendly beauty — will

> Seem but the clouds of the sky
> When the horizon fades;
> Or a bird's sleepy cry
> Among the deepening shades.

In 'From "Œdipus at Colonus"' the same obsession lurks, breeding this sad philosophy: —

> Never to have lived is best, ancient writers say;
> Never to have drawn the breath of life, never to
> have looked into the eye of day;
> The second best's a gay goodnight and quickly
> turn away.

Yet there is a third destiny, which is best of all, and we wish it him. When he was old and weary of time there came to Thomas the Rhymer the message so long expected that it had become well-nigh forgotten. A white hind passed down the street, and he followed her, and was no more seen in this dreary world.

The Strange Vanguard, by Arnold Bennett. London: Cassell, 1928. 7*s.* 6*d.* net.

[*Manchester Guardian*]

It would be dastardly to reveal the reason why that odd compact of innocence and sophistication, recklessness and caution, guile and good-heartedness, the millionaire Lord Furber, abducted from Naples on his two-thousand-ton yacht Vanguard the decent and considerable person of Mr. Septimius Sutherland, a power in financial quarters in the City of London. For it is in pursuit of that secret that Mr. Bennett keeps us ranging amiably in Lord Furber's track through the palatial suites of hotels splendid and majestic on the Mediterranean, gambling for sums that leave us agape in the International Sporting Club at Monte Carlo, exploring the fittings, human and other, of one of the most luxurious private craft that ever sailed fashionable waters, and dealing zestfully with the rapid changes of mentality of that saucy but shrewd piece, Miss Harriet Perkins, who is accidentally included in the abduction, and who sets a bachelor yacht by the ears, to her own advantage. If, like Septimius, we are 'always apt to be ingenuous when we find ourselves in centres of fashion and expensive wickedness,' we shall mightily enjoy this vicarious experience of the fleshpots of which

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Mr. Bennett again shows himself an expert caterer. And if we are of the more squeamish sort who find a protracted diet of paté de foie gras a little nauseating, there is at least the personality of Furber to carry us along. For this self-made Five Towns millionaire is a card of his kind, with a robust outlook on life that his success has not weakened.

Afghanistan of the Afghans, by Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah. London: The Diamond Press, 1928. 21*s*. net.

[*Times Literary Supplement*]

As is to be expected in a book bearing such a title, the author is careful to supply good measure in the way of descriptions of local customs and beliefs, many of these latter being quite un-Moslem in character. He writes fully about social and domestic life, notes for the benefit of his readers the pleasing imagery of an Afghan wedding invitation in which the guest is assured that the hosts strew their eyes beneath his feet, and records the strictness wherewith the Seyyids, or descendants of the Prophet Mahomet, intermarry among themselves, and how the leaders of religion maintain an even closer matrimonial preserve. On the fringes of the faith stand the necromancers, wizards, and enchanters, who form, together with their magic, which has much influence with the populace, the subject for a whole chapter; and others are devoted to the influence of Pan-Islam and to the Moslem revival in Central Asia since the Russian Revolution. Indeed, so much of the book is about the Moslem religion and its effect upon the Afghans and some of their neighbors that the reader will readily perceive that, although in outward seeming King Amanullah Khan has taken several pages from the book of Ghazi Mustapha Kemal Pasha in Angora, in the way of introducing Western usages and wearing Western clothes, Afghanistan is by no means a second Turkey. . . .

Although the author is able to enumerate many reforms and changes introduced by the present King, he is careful to point out that His Majesty is not being precipitate in his action. Afghanistan may have detected something that is good and useful in the West, but the country is being guarded against any danger of having too much of a good thing. Most particularly is the King insistent on being ware of Western money. Great as is his need of funds for developing his country, and many as are the uses to which he could usefully and beneficially put it, yet King Amanullah Khan declines to borrow from abroad, as he considers that the concessions for which the would-be lenders ask in return for their loans might open Afghanistan to foreign intervention and imperil her independence. Even his recent treaties with other states are most carefully worded so as to exclude any possibility of the introduction of foreign influence into the country by a side wind — the British Minister, for instance, is expressly forbidden to build any church, mosque, or temple within his legation; and the author, on this showing, seems to have ample grounds for his assurance that neither India nor Great Britain has anything to fear from any subservience to Soviet policy on the part of the Court of Kabul. The converse is likewise true. At the same time, however, the author rather suggests that the recent Moslem revival in Central Asia may, in the end, cause trouble to the Soviet Government; and in that case it is hardly to be supposed that a strong and staunch Moslem Afghanistan would be entirely disinterested in events on the other side of her only really vulnerable frontier.

The author, amid his wealth of information about present-day Afghanistan, her inhabitants, her resources, her ambitions, and her policy, is almost unduly discreet in his account of her history during the nineteenth century. British sensibilities would not have been wounded had he referred to the events which preceded the pathetic arrival of Dr. Brydon at Jalalabad as the sole survivor of a British army, and Sirdar Ikbal Ali Shah's book would have been enriched by a picturesque page of history. It might also usefully have been fortified by a fuller supply of information about some of the past rulers of Afghanistan and their complicated relationships, and by more details about the men of note and standing in the country who are working with their sovereign to improve its conditions and further its fortunes.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

OUR OWN BOOKSHELF

The Three-Cornered Hat, by Don Pedro Antonio De Alarcon. Translated by Martin Armstrong. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1928. $3.00.

THIS Spanish classic of the late nineteenth century has now been made available for English readers in a delightful translation, which, in its style and method of treatment, smacks strongly of Fielding. The story itself is as bold as parts of *Tom Jones*, and equally harmless. Miller Lucas lives in marital happiness with his beautiful but faithful wife Frasquita, on whom the Corregidor looks with sinful intent. His complicated plot to bring about her downfall is frustrated, but not until we have had a thorough mix-up of all the characters and Miller Lucas has gone to avenge his imagined disgrace on the Corregidor's wife. There is opportunity enough for treatment in a more vulgar vein, but restraint has been exercised, and the best of good taste. As the author explains in his preface, the only thing we gather from the story is 'that married folks sleep together, and that no husband likes another man to sleep with his wife.' Far from resembling a French bedroom farce or modern realistic sex novel, *The Three-Cornered Hat* is gay and clean, containing traces of the ballad from which the story is adapted and some typically picaresque Spanish elements. The story is delightful and amusing, the translation is excellent, and the illustrations are adequate.

Fireflies, by Rabindranath Tagore. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1928. $2.50.

THESE *pensées* — George Moore has recently protested the use of the term, but none other is quite adequate — are the pistachios of literature. Tagore calls them 'fireflies,' and explains himself when he writes: 'My thoughts are fireflies, Specks of living light twinkling in the dark.' Some of his typical thoughts are: 'Days are colored bubbles that float upon the surface of fathomless night. . . . April, like a child, writes hieroglyphs on dust with flowers, wipes them away and forgets. . . . A light laughter in the steps of creation carries it swiftly across time. . . . The jasmine's lisping of love to the sun is her flowers. . . . The sectarian thinks that he has the sea ladled into his private pond. . . . Love's gift cannot be given; it waits to be accepted.' People who like this sort of thing will like this book. No more than one poem, so called, appears on each page of this appropriately decorated and neatly printed volume.

The Patriot, by Alfred Neumann. Adapted by Ashley Dukes. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1928. $2.00.

LIKE novelized biographies, historical dramas evidently intended primarily for closet consumption are enjoying a vogue at the present time. Mr. Neumann's play is woven around the assassination of that crazy Russian monarch, Paul I, and the clever machinations of that suave statesman, Peter Pahlen. It contains much that would make it an excellent stage production, but to appreciate fully the twists and turns given the plot by the psychological insight of the Governor of St. Petersburg one should read the play itself.

Here we have a Tsar resembling in many respects Kaiser Wilhelm II, and a statesman who is loyal to Russia. Had Peter Pahlen sought self-advancement in his plot to save Russia by killing the Tsar and installing Alexander on the throne, he would have been no patriot. Having succeeded, Pahlen commits suicide with his equally patriotic but much less intellectual orderly, Stepan. When Pahlen discusses the plot with the Tsar and when he admits his guilt we find a good intellectual dramatic situation. When Pahlen melodramatically offers

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to let the Tsar shoot him we suspect hokum, for drawn pistols always arouse an audience. The Baroness Ostermann is the only woman in the play, but she provides the necessary material for a boudoir setting and a subplot well linked with the main theme.

Historical inaccuracies should not be invoked to condemn such an excellent drama, which vividly describes an exciting incident in the history of a great nation and depicts characters whose real nature has hitherto perhaps been suppressed by an inimical régime.

Annie Besant, by Geoffrey West; **Aphra Behn**, by V. Sackville-West. New York: The Viking Press, 1928. $2.00 each.

No two better contrasting characters than Annie Besant and Aphra Behn could perhaps have been used to introduce the Representative Women series, of which Francis Birrell is general editor. Both these women were vilified by a public who thought first of their sex and then of their accomplishments. But while Annie Besant is primarily spiritual and a reformer, Aphra Behn is essentially physical and an entertainer. In a sense, each was typical of her era, the Victorian and the Restoration. Both were writers, Annie Besant leaning toward cold politics and Aphra Behn toward carnal passion. Annie Besant was interned for her political activities in India; Aphra Behn was imprisoned for her debts in England. The public stigmatized them as 'harlots' — certainly unjustly in the case of Annie Besant, who taught birth control with religious zeal; certainly with truth in the case of Aphra Behn. Both were pioneers, and each, in her own way, a representative woman.

Like the other biographies in this series, Geoffrey West's study of Annie Besant is concise, clear, and adequate. Although he is no Theosophist, the author explains the spiritual adventures of this deeply religious woman who wandered from Christianity through atheism to Theosophy. If Mr. West seems to slight Mrs. Besant's activities in the Fabian Society or as a trade-union agitator, it is simply because Annie Besant herself subordinated them to her work as a religious leader and an agitator for Indian reform. Mr. West's criticism of her literary and political work is dispassionately cruel, for Mrs. Besant has just celebrated her eightieth birthday. Although sympathetic, he is unenthusiastic, and believes that she will go down in history as a great English Titan of the Victorian Age.

Aphra Behn opened the gates of literature to women, but those gates led to the barnyard rather than to the Arcadian fields. Her career as an American settler, Dutch spy, and London novelist, playwright, and prostitute reads almost as excitingly as one of her own stories. Much of her adventurous life is shrouded in mystery. V. Sackville-West sums up: 'Gay, tragic, generous, smutty, rich of nature and big of heart, propping her elbows on the tavern table, cracking her jokes, penning those midnight letters to her sad lover by the light of a tallow dip — this is the Aphra of whom one cannot take leave without respect.'

The biographical plan followed in these two volumes calls for a concise, scholarly, and readable account of the life itself followed by a short criticism of the subject's work. Interesting details are emphasized rather than moot questions of scholarship. In both treatment and subject these two biographies prove excellent emissaries for forthcoming additions to the series.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

DISCRETION AND INDISCRETION

How can we improve public credit, or genuinely reduce war debt, or promote employment, so long as our Parliament remains careless and our administration profligate? — *Alwyn Parker*

* * *

Efficiency is not the ultimate measuring rod of any form of government. What matters at least as much in any measurement is the amount and variety of the personal energies enlisted in the work of government.

— *Professor Ernest Barker*

* * *

I do not believe that anybody seriously imagines that a weak British Navy would contribute to the peace of the world.

— *First Lord of the Admiralty*

* * *

I have a theory that the service which has been thought out to appeal to the children makes the best service, too, for an adult congregation.

— *Reverend A. R. Browne-Wilkinson*

* * *

The human environment of the future will be one in which brains will count for more than muscle. — *C. J. Bond*

* * *

Sir Arthur Sullivan was a great composer of comic opera, but in church music he never wrote anything worth a cuss.

— *Dr. Edward Bairstow*

* * *

Impartiality is a quality of character rather than a product of education. — *A. H. Lieck*

* * *

Girls of sixteen are much younger to-day than they were thirty or forty years ago.

— *Mrs. Bramwell Booth*

* * *

There is a curious carelessness about the methods of propagandists. If they make obvious errors in details it is only natural that their more general facts should be suspect. The other day there came to the *Outlook* office a circular letter from Mr. Harrison Brown, the 'European Representative, American Committee for the Outlawry of War,' in London, enclosing a newspaper cutting of one of Senator Borah's articles. It was addressed 'The Hon. George Wyndham, Editor "The Outlook," 69, Fleet Street,' and began 'Dr. Mr. Wyndham.' Mr. George Wyndham, it is true, founded the *Outlook*, and it has always been this paper's effort to live up to his high ideals. There is no record, however, that he ever himself edited the *Outlook*, and Mr. Harrison Brown before writing might easily have ascertained the fact that this brilliant and famous statesman's career was prematurely cut short by death as long ago as 1913. — *Outlook*

* * *

I have been too long in politics to look for a new heaven and a new earth.

— *Stanley Baldwin*

* * *

Christians have never quite made up their minds whether the City of God is to be in heaven or on earth. — *Dean Inge*

* * *

There are only two levelers — the House of Commons and death. — *Sir Park Goff*

* * *

Josephine Baker, the negro dancer, whose appearance here [Vienna] in the 'Black and White' revue was violently opposed by the Austrian Fascisti, is now in hot water with the clergy. The revue is being presented at the Johann Strauss Theatre, and the officials of St. Paul's Church, which is in its immediate vicinity, profess to be greatly scandalized thereby. To-day it is announced in the *Church Gazette* that three 'expiatory services' are to be held next week in St. Paul's Church, preceded by 'penitential sermons.' The so-called 'knell of repentance' will be sung. The Clerical *Reichspost* attacks the revue, which, however, has been scoring a considerable popular success.

— *Daily News and Westminster Gazette*

* * *

Our schools seem to afford a convenient experimenting ground for all sorts of stunt-mongers.

— *R. J. Anderson*

* * *

School is no longer a place of penance or torment, but a place of joy, freedom, and health.

— *Bishop of Peterborough*

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

An Important Development That Means to You a Larger, More Comprehensive and Still More Valuable

LIVING AGE

FOR many months the editors of *The Living Age* have been giving serious attention to the question of how to make the magazine of greater value to its readers.

As we look back upon our efforts, they seem to us in many ways successful; and yet there has been something of scrappiness in our effort to paint our world picture in the large. The period covered by the semi-monthly issues of *The Living Age* has been perhaps too short to enable us to present the fully rounded, comprehensive view of the world's activities that our readers require to-day. After long deliberation, we have therefore decided that *The Living Age* can best fulfill its own peculiar mission by presenting freshly *every month*, in a greatly expanded magazine, the completely interpretative picture of the current scene.

HENCE, taking effect after this number, a far larger and more valuable *Living Age*, with many new features, will reach you once each month, carrying in a single, comprehensive issue the full thirty days' graphic and thrilling story of the world in motion.

YOU will enjoy the additional departments in the June 1st number. You will look forward to the new features which will be added from time to time thereafter. And we have full confidence that in this new, enlarged *Living Age* you will find more pleasure and profit than ever before.

THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE LIVING AGE WILL BE DATED JUNE FIRST

EFFECTIVE with that issue, the price of the single copy will be increased to 35 cents. But this change will not affect present subscribers

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

THE GUIDE POST

PROSPECTS of Franco-German coöperation continue to excite the British press, and M. Jacques Seydoux, a member of the French diplomatic service, has written a leading article for the London *Times* that has attracted wide attention on the Continent. We have not only printed this article entire, but in Around the World we give a striking German comment on it.

❦ ❦ ❦

We have several times drawn attention in Business Abroad to the fact that France is marshaling her gold reserves. Max Hermant gives a full account of what France is doing, and why.

❦ ❦ ❦

Arbeiter Zeitung, the leading Radical paper in Vienna, explains how Stalin has attempted to steal Trotskii's thunder. We are inclined to suspect, however, that the present tendency of the Soviet authorities to bear down on the rich peasants is a passing phase, and that the future course of the Stalinites will be away from Trotskii's world-revolution theories.

❦ ❦ ❦

Jules Sauerwein, the ubiquitous foreign editor of *Le Matin*, indicates the points of friction that have been disturbing the situation between Mussolini and the Holy Father. We gather that Cardinal Gasparri is again in the ascendant, and that the Vatican is not likely to smile on an Italian government that refuses it even a nominal extension of temporal power.

❦ ❦ ❦

Henry Bordeaux, a member of the French Academy, has read Maurice Paléologue's book of conversations with ex-Empress Eugénie previous to its publication in book form. His extensive notice therefore gives us an advance view of what promises to be an impressive justification of the woman who was generally accused of being the evil genius of Napoleon III.

❦ ❦ ❦

There are, in general, two points of view regarding American civilization. One prefers to look upon us as transplanted Europeans; the other feels that we are producing a unique civilization of our own. The *Times* correspondent, like most Englishmen, belongs to the latter school. Perhaps Continentals are less disturbed by certain surface differences that bewilder our good English cousins.

❦ ❦ ❦

Leopold Weiss's account of the troubles in Arabia contains any amount of important material. The author has lived in that part of the world for years, and describes from the scene of action the clashing ambitions of Ibn Saud and the British imperialists, to say nothing of a number of unpronounceable tribes.

❦ ❦ ❦

The cause of Disarmament suffers, on the whole, from a decidedly cynical press. Lord Robert Cecil's views are those of a struggling minority — 'Pertinax' represents the more conventional attitude. The latter, by the way, contributes regularly to the *Écho de Paris*, and his pronouncements on foreign policy attract, on the whole, more European attention than those of any other French journalist.

❦ ❦ ❦

Francis Delaisi is known to American readers through his valuable work entitled *Political Myths and Economic Realities*, which the Viking Press published last autumn. On this occasion he takes up the cudgels for one Fernand Forest, who is said to have perfected the automobile and made it what it is to-day. To stockholders in General Motors, therefore, this obscure French mechanic may seem more like a benefactor than he does to mere pedestrians.

❦ ❦ ❦

We do not pretend that Hippolyte Taine's unpublished essay on style is particularly engrossing reading. Its sententious spaciousness, however, calls to memory the good old days when people argued about abstractions instead of about static.

PRODUCED BY UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED